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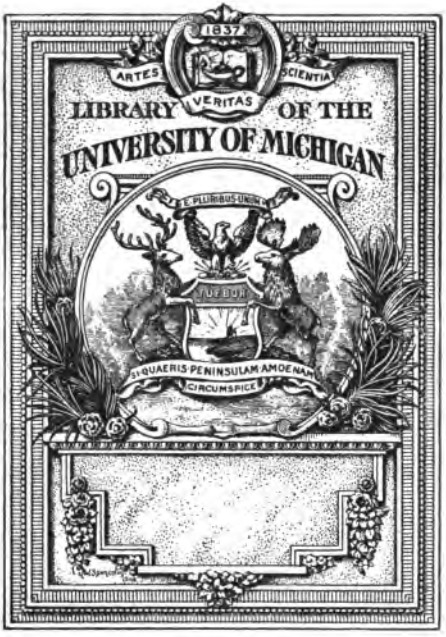
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English Verse

DRAMATIC SCENES

AND

CHARACTERS

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EDITED BY

W. J. LINTON AND R. H. STODDARD

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INTRODUCTION.

THE origin of the drama in English Verse must be sought in the twelfth century in the Miracle plays which were then in vogue, and by which the learned clerks who wrote them endeavored to entertain and instruct their unlearned countrymen through the scenic representation of Bible histories and legends of saints and martyrs. The characters in these rude compositions, of which a sufficiency, even for historical purposes, has reached us in the Chester, Coventry, and Wakefield Mysteries, were always actual personages. They were succeeded by a race of allegorical shadows in the Moralities, which began to appear early in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and which lingered upon the stage until after the death of Elizabeth. The golden age of this primitive drama was the reign of Henry the Eighth, and the master-spirits were Skelton and Heywood. Skelton wrote four pieces, one of which, Magnificence, a goodly interlude and a mery, may still be read in his works. It contains eighteen characters; is about the length of one of Shakespeare's plays; and, if somewhat heavy and inartificial, is not without vigor and earnestness. Heywood wrote

six plays, of which the best is The Four P's, a very Mery Enterlude of a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Poticary, and a Pedlar. Distinguished from the Moral plays of the period, in that the story, or fable, of each is conducted by characters of real life, and not by allegorical personifications, they are the first genuine specimens of the drama in English Verse. Contemporary with Heywood was Nicholas Udall, head-master of Eton, who wrote the earliest English comedy, Ralph Roister Doister. Unlike the interludes of Heywood, which were in single acts, it was divided into acts and scenes, was interspersed with merry songs, and was provided with a plot that afforded good matter for good acting. Belonging to this cycle of old plays is Gammer Gurton's Needle, which hardly strikes a modern reader as being a Ryght Pithy, Pleasant, and Merie Comedie, though it contains a rollicking drinking song ("I cannot eat but little meat"), which was probably not written by its reputed author, Bishop Still; the play of Misogonus, which is not composed in couplets, like the interludes of Udall and Heywood, but in rhyming quatrains, and is completed in the unusual number of four acts; and Bale's drama of Kynge Johan, which occupies an intermediate place between the off-going Moralities and the on-coming Chronicle Histories, King John, Pope Innocent, and other historical figures mingling with such abstractions as Widowed Britannia, Imperial Majesty, and Treason, Verity, and Sedition. Precisely when these medleys, and others which might be named, were written, or played, has not been in all cases determined, and is of no consequence except to students of the Early English Drama, to whom as a

rule history is more important than poetry. Dismissing them, therefore, we come to the first English tragedy, Gorboduc, which was shown before the Queen's most excellent Majesty on the 18th of January, 1562, in her Highness' Court of Whitehall, by the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple. Many things went to the making of Gorboduc, the authors of which, Norton and Sackville, may be said to have been the first of a new race of poets, to whom was committed the torch of history lighted at the altar of antiquity by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and passed from hand to hand along the centuries, now flickering and now flaring triumphantly. The son of a small landed proprietor in Bedfordshire, a good scholar, and a zealous Protestant, Norton entered himself in 1555 as a student of the Inner Temple. Born at Buckhurst, the son of a privy councillor and the daughter of a Lord Mayor, and connected with royalty through his grandmother, who was aunt to Anne Boleyn, the mother of Elizabeth, educated at Oxford, and later at Cambridge, where he received the degree of Master of Arts, Sackville also entered himself as a student of the Inner Temple, where he made the acquaintance of Norton. Both were young, and both addicted to letters, Norton to such serious walks as are implied in translating Calvin's Institutes, and the Psalms in conjunction with Sternhold and Hopkins, and Sackville to the lighter walks implied in the composition of Latin and English verse.

The immediate predecessors of Sackville and Norton were Baldwin and Ferrers, who, following in the footsteps of Lydgate and Boccaccio, conceived the plan of

The Mirror for Magistrates, which is generally credited to Sackville, whose two contributions thereto did not appear in print until four years after the publication of the first portion, and a year after the production of Gorboduc, to which, however, they may have been prior. The Mirror for Magistrates prepared the way for the first English tragedy, to which it was the long and swelling prologue. But the path which led into this way, and by which alone it could be traversed royally, had been discovered by Surrey when he sat down to translate the second and fourth books of the *Æneid*, and, more fortunate than the masters before him, lighted upon blank verse. We assume that Gorboduc was successful, since it was surreptitiously printed, and passed through two or three editions before the death of Sackville, and since it was followed by a line of historical plays which culminated in the Chronicle Histories that are usually associated with the great name of Shakespeare. A drama in form, but devoid of the dramatic spirit in the evolution of action and of character, it is a carefully considered, lofty production, written in fluent, correct language that admits of a certain pomp of expression, and is suited to the dignity of the sentiments which it conveys. Sidney, who knew Sackville, admits, in his Defence of Poesy, that it is full of stately speeches and well-sounding phrases, climbing to the height of Seneca his style, and full of notable morality, which it doth most delightfully teach, and so obtain the very end of poesy; yet he declares that, in truth, it is very defectuous in the circumstances, which grieves him, because it might not remain an exact model of all tragedies. Rymer,

writing a century later, believed that it did so remain, affirming that it was a fable better turned for tragedy than any on this side of the Alps, and that it might have been a better direction to Shakespeare and Ben Jonson than any guide they had the luck to follow, The judgment which Lamb passed upon it in his Specimens has been accepted as the final one. "The style of this old play is stiff and cumbersome, like the dresses of its times. There may be flesh and blood underneath, but we cannot get at it."

Following the dramatic current in the stream of English Verse from Gorboduc onward, we find it setting in a historic direction in Appius and Virginia, Damon and Pythias, Cambyses, Locrine, Marius and Sylla, The Battle of Alcazar, Edward I., Alphonsus, King of Arragon, James IV., the two parts of Tamburlaine, and the Massacre of Paris, which were all written before the close of the eighth decade of the sixteenth century; and in a romantic or imaginative direction in Campaspe, Sappho and Phao, The Arraignment of Paris, David and Bathsabe, Orlando Furioso, Faust, and The Jew of Malta, which also were written within the same period. Behind these plays, and others produced at that time, were the talent and genius of five different poets—George Peele, John Lyly, Thomas Lodge, Robert Greene, and Christopher Marlowe. They were young, they were college-bred, and they lived by their pens. That is to say, they were professional poets, who supplied what was demanded of them, which was plays, Marlowe writing six or seven, Greene five, Lyly eight, and Peele six. Two wrote prose as well as verse, and were rather more distin-

guished for their prose than their verse—Lyly for Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit, and Euphues and his England, and Greene for Mamillia, Morando, Menaphon, and a succession of similar stories. Lyly, who, for a time, was a fashionable author, was applauded as the creator of "a new English;" and the beauty at court who could not parley Euphuism was as little regarded as her sister in the next generation who spoke not French. Borrowing the manner and a portion of the matter of his Euphues from North's translation of The Dial for Princes of the Spaniard Guevara, he created a taste for romantic prose fiction in England,—a taste at once recognized by Sidney and his sister Mary, for whom he wrote the Arcadia, and at once pandered to by Greene in his score or more of hastily scribbled love pamphlets—a swarm of novelettes in the wake of the first English novel. Our chief interest in Greene and Lyly lies in the fact that Shakespeare read their prose, and found it useful to him. As dramatists they need not detain us.

Two years after the publication of Gordobuc, the best portions of which were undoubtedly from the pen of Sackville, and one year after the publication of the second instalment of The Mirror for Magistrates, which contained Sackville's only contributions thereto—The Induction and The Complaint of Henry Duke of Buckingham—a man-child, who was to be the Master-Spirit of his age, came into the world at Stratford-on-Avon. A year of glory, the year to be longest remembered in the annals of English Verse, it was memorable not only because it witnessed the birth of William Shakespeare, but also because it witnessed the birth of Chris-

topher Marlowe. Born two months earlier than Shakespeare, the son of a shoemaker of Canterbury, Marlowe was educated at the King's School, in the city of his birth, and later at Benet College, Cambridge, where he matriculated as a pensioner shortly after the completion of his seventeenth year. Who defrayed the expenses of his collegiate life, and to which of the learned professions it was apparently directed, we have no means of knowing. All we know is that he went up to London, as Greene did about two years before him, as Shakespeare did about a year after him, and as many English poets have done since, carrying with them the works that were to make them immortal—to the great world of London, where he began to write plays, and at once distinguished himself by his first play, Tamburlaine the Great. The success of Tamburlaine, which was great, was partly due to the genius of Marlowe, and partly to the measure of Surrey, which, fingered feebly by Grimoald, stiffly by Sackville, and monotonously by Gascoigne, became in his hands the instrument of might, and majesty, and magnificence. It silenced for the moment the tinkling couplets to which the earlier dramatists had accustomed the ears of their audiences, and which are referred to in the prologue:

> "From jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits,
> And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
> We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
> Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
> Threatening the world with high astounding terms,
> And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.
> View but his picture in this tragic glass,
> And then applaud his fortunes as you please."

What first strikes a modern reader of Tamburlaine is the extravagance of its conception, and the turgidity and bombast of its expression: what next strikes him, if he has a keen sense of the poetical, is the occasional beauty and grandeur of single lines and phrases. A living English poet, whose genius belongs to the same order as Marlowe's, admits the stormy monotony of Titanic truculence which blusters like a simoom through the noisy course of its ten fierce acts, but declares that there are two grave reasons why it must always be remembered with distinction and mentioned with honor. "It is the first poem ever written in English blank verse, as distinguished from mere rhymeless decasyllabics; and it contains one of the noblest passages, perhaps indeed the noblest in the literature of the world, ever written by one of the greatest masters of poetry in loving praise of the glorious delights and sublime submission to the everlasting limits of his art. In its highest and most distinctive qualities, in unfaltering and infallible command of the right note of music and the proper tone of color for the finest touches of poetic execution, no poet of the most elaborate modern school, working at ease upon every consummate resource of luxuriant learning and leisurely refinement, has ever excelled the best and most representative work of a man who had literally no models before him, and probably or evidently was often if not always compelled to write against time for his living."

The glowing poetical admiration of Swinburne is not shared by the cooler and more critical Dyce. "With very little discrimination of character," he writes, "with much extravagance of incident, with no

pathos where pathos was to be expected, and with a profusion of inflated language, Tamburlaine is nevertheless a very impressive drama, and undoubtedly superior to all the English tragedies which preceded it ;—superior to them in the effectiveness with which the events are brought out, in the poetic feeling which animates the whole, and in the nerve and variety of the versification. Marlowe was yet to show that he could impart truthfulness to his scenes ; but not a few passages might be gleaned from Tamburlaine as grand in thought, as splendid in imagery, and as happy in expression as any which his later works contain." The second part of Tamburlaine was followed by The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus, a remarkable work in which the judgment of the poet was as conspicuous as his power. Successful at once, it continued so popular after the death of Marlowe that additions were made to it by his fellow dramatists, Dekker and Rowley, and once it was published in the ill-printed quartos which were then in vogue, it went through four editions in less than thirty years. A sure foundation upon which the fame of Marlowe has rested for nearly three hundred years, it was warmly admired by Goethe, who said it was all greatly planned, and thought at one time of translating it, and even by Hallam, who was more impressed by the awful melancholy about its Mephistopheles than by the malignant mirth of which Goethe's fiend is the symbol. "To such a genius," said Lamb, "the History of Faustus must have been delectable food: to wander in the fields where curiosity is forbidden to go, to approach the dark gulf near enough to look in, to be busied in

speculations which are the rottenest part of the core of the fruit that fell from the Tree of Knowledge." The dates at which Marlowe's plays were written have not been fully determined, but placing the first part of Tamburlaine in 1585 (as Fleay does), and the fragment of Dido, which Nash finished, in the year of his death, his whole poetic life was comprised in eight years. During this time he wrote, in addition to the plays named, The Jew of Malta, The Massacre of Paris, and Edward II., of which Lamb thought so highly. "The reluctant pangs of abdicating Royalty in Edward furnished hints which Shakespeare scarce improved in his Richard the Second; and the death-scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene ancient or modern with which I am acquainted."

The poets of Marlowe's day, Marlowe among them, lived from hand to mouth, and, like all who so lived, were reckless and improvident. The growing importance of the Drama, which had begun to put forth its first vigorous growths, created a demand for new plays which they were ready to supply. When Marlowe entered upon his triumphant career with the first part of Tamburlaine he excited the enmity of Nash and Greene, but it was not long before they patched up a truce, and banded themselves against a young poet player, who had lately appeared in London, and whose revisions of and additions to their plays were thought to be better than the originals. Nineteenth century criticism has busied itself in curiously considering the authorship of the old plays to which the genius of Shakespeare imparted vitality, and has assigned por-

tions of it to Marlowe, Greene, and Peele. The hand of Marlowe is thought to be visible in the Taming of the Shrew and Titus Andronicus, and Swinburne declares that it is as nearly certain as anything can be which depends upon cumulative and collateral evidence that the better part of what is best in the serious scenes of King Henry VI. is mainly the work of Marlowe. The lives of Greene and Marlowe were so disorderly and their endings so tragical, it is no wonder that they were seized upon by Puritan writers to point a moral. Greene abandoned his wife, and lived with the sister of a highwayman, went from bad to worse in his circumstances, and finally died in destitution in the house of a poor shoemaker at Dowgate, by whose wife he was kindly cared for in his last illness, and who crowned his dead body with bays. He died on the 3d of September, 1592, and the next day was buried in the New Churchyard near Bedlam. The end of Marlowe was still more awful, for in less than a year after Greene—on the 1st of June, 1593—he was done to death in a tavern brawl at Deptford by one Francis Archer, whom he had attempted to stab while they were playing at backgammon, and who avoiding the blow caught him by the wrist and stabbed him in the eye with his own dagger.

> "Cut was the branch that might have grown full straight;
> And burned was Apollo's laurel-bough
> That sometime grew within this learned man."

Beginning with Marlowe's Tamburlaine, which was written about 1585, and ending with Shirley's Honoria and Mammon, which was written about 1659, the reign

of the Poetic Drama in England did not exceed three-quarters of a century. The writers who held possession of the stage during this period are roughly classed together in the popular mind as the Elizabethan Dramatists, and are remembered (when they are remembered), only as stars whose ineffectual fires were paled by the superior brightness of Shakespeare. But many of them were not Elizabethan Dramatists, except in a large, spiritual sense, as a little chronology will satisfy even the popular mind. Waiving the order of Shakespeare's early plays, upon which few of his critics can agree, it is certain that all his great works belong to the reign of James, and not the reign of Elizabeth. Let us see what they are:—Hamlet, Othello, Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Cymbeline, Tempest, and Winter's Tale. The great works of Jonson,—Volpone, Epicœne, Cataline, and The Alchemist, are not Elizabethan, but Jacobean. And the same may be said of the good works of Chapman, Dekker, Heywood (Thomas), Middleton, Marston, Webster, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger. Omitting from the list of Shakespeare's contemporaries the names of Marlowe and Greene, who made their exits so speedily and darkly, the rivals of Shakespeare after they were gone,—the variously gifted men who wrote for the stage, as he did, shared with him such honors as the stage could bestow, and outlived him,—were Chapman, his senior by seven years, who wrote thirteen plays before his death, Jonson, his junior by ten years, who wrote thirteen plays before his death, Dekker, his junior by eleven years, who wrote eleven plays, Heywood, his junior by eighteen

years, who wrote eleven plays, Middleton, his junior by ten years, who wrote twelve plays, Marston, his junior by eleven years, who wrote nine plays, Webster, his junior by about eighteen years, who wrote six plays, and Beaumont and Fletcher, his juniors by twenty-two and twelve years, who wrote seventeen plays, all, be it understood, during Shakespeare's lifetime, and before his death in 1616.

The number of dramatists (we have named only the most prominent) who flourished in the time of Shakespeare, and the estimation in which they were held by their contemporaries, destroys the popular illusion that Shakespeare was considered the great dramatist of his time. It was not so ; for think what we may of him now, he was thought of then as one among many who wrote for the theatre. What he and they wrote was not Literature to the audiences who were entertained by it ; Jonson alone had the temerity to call his Plays—Works. This fact may partially account for the strange want of intellectual recognition with which the plays of Shakespeare were received, but it does not fully account for it. Nothing can, except the fact that the art with which they were informed was mistaken for nature, and accepted without thought. There was art in the Choruses in Cataline, but where, pray, was the art in the knocking at the gate in Macbeth? The plays of Shakespeare, like the plays of his fellows, appealed to the eyes and ears of their common countrymen—eyes which were as much delighted with the action of Every Man in his Humour as with the action of Hamlet,—ears to which the rant of Jeronimo was as noble as the sublimity of Lear. What was

obviously great in Shakespeare was obviously understood by his audiences, or they would not have listened, as they did, to the luxuriant poetry which was intertwined with it, and which sometimes threatened to crush it; but what was reconditely great in him, and what differentiated his work from the work of others, was not guessed at. That he had an instinctive, infallible knowledge of life, that he divined all the springs of human action, that the heart of man was as a book wherein he read strange matters, that Nature shared her secrets with him as with no man before or since, that he was the greatest poet and wisest man of his time, the Great Poet and the Wise Man of all time,—the discovery of this truth was reserved for a more reverential age than that of Elizabeth, or James. What Jonson thought of him we gather from his noble poem, To the Memory of my Beloved Master William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us, in the First Folio, and from his Discoveries, where he tells us that he loved the man, and honored his memory on this side of idolatry as much as any.

> "Nothing can cover his high fame but Heaven,
> No pyramids set off his memories,
> But the eternal substance of his greatness."

Very different from gentle Shakespeare was the bricklayer's step-son, Ben Jonson—a sturdy fellow, who mistook roughness for honesty, and a hot temper for independence. A soldier of fortune from the beginning, he was oftener on the losing than the winning side. He was always in hot water with somebody,—now with Marston and Dekker, whom he speedily for-

gave, now with Inigo Jones, whom he never forgave, and between whiles with Mistress Jonson, from whom he once preferred to live apart for five whole years, and who, it is to be hoped, forgave him. At the age of twenty-four, or thereabout, he was in the pay of Henslowe, from whom he received as his share of something the sum of three shillings and sixpence, and who at a later period loaned him four pounds. Before or after this—probably before—tradition makes him a strolling player who had taken the part of mad Jeronimo. We hear of him in 1598 as the writer of the comedy of Every Man in his Humour, of which the story goes that it was offered to the Lord Chamberlain's company, and was about to be returned to him when it came into the hands of Shakespeare, who, struck by something in it, read it himself, and recommended it to the theatre. It was accepted, and cast with the whole strength of the company, Master Shakespeare filling the character of Old Knowell, the character, it is thought, in which we see him in the half-length portrait in the Folios. Five years later his tragedy of Sejanus was produced at the Globe, and Shakespeare played in that also. Always scholarly and careful, he now set to work diligently, and writing with great forethought and infinite pains, laboriously wrought out in the next nine years the masterpieces upon which his fame rests—Volpone, Epicœne, Cataline, and The Alchemist. Apart from his dramatic work, of which it thinks far less than it should, especially his Masques, posterity has chosen to remember Jonson as the chief inheritor of the convivial habits of Greene and Marlowe, and presiding at the Mermaid

Tavern, as Dryden did afterward at Will's Coffee-house. A club of choice spirits which Raleigh is said to have founded met there nightly, and made merry with each other over their meat and drink. Rare Ben was in his element among them—a colossal man, weighing upward of twenty stone, with a mountain belly, and a rocky face, seamed, rubicund, scorbutic—enveloped in a slovenly wrapper, like a coachman's great-coat, with slits under the armpits, making sad havoc of the pastry and the digestive cheese, which he washed down with cups of his beloved Canary wine for which the Mermaid was famous.

Sometimes here o' nights there came a handsome, well-shaped man, with a spacious brow, observant eyes, and full lips, in the corners of which laughter was lurking—a sagacious, facetious, masterful spirit. After the manner of the choice spirits around them he and rare Ben encountered each other, and the tradition of their encounters has reached us through old Fuller as though it had been a brave sea-fight. "Many were the wit-combats betwixt Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war: Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning; solid, but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention." Among others who were drawn as by a magnet to the nightly merriment at the Mermaid, was Master Selden, who was studying law, and writing antiquarian works in Latin; Master Donne, who had

come up from Pilford, where Mistress Anne was expecting to lie in with her annual babe; Master Chapman, whose Monsieur d'Olive was soon to be played at the Blackfriars; and, richly apparelled, as became their young manhood and rising fortunes, the inseparable friends, Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher. What Beaumont thought of these nights at the Mermaid he communicated to Jonson in a rhyming epistle from the country, whither he and Fletcher had retired in order to put the finishing touches to a couple of comedies.

> "What things have we seen
> Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
> So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
> As if that every one from whence they came
> Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
> And had resolved to live a fool the rest
> Of his dull life."

Of the English dramatic poets who lived about the time of Shakespeare, all but Chapman, were born in his boyhood or young manhood, and the plays of all but Ford and Shirley were in possession of the stage before his death. His contemporaries could compare him with his rivals in tragedy and comedy, with Jonson, Dekker, Heywood, Middleton, Marston, Webster, Beaumont and Fletcher, Rowley, and Massinger, and with such lesser luminaries as Munday, Chettle, Wilkins, Tourneur, and Field. They did so, no doubt, and they did not reach the critical conclusion of the nineteenth century that he was superior to all. They were great writers with all their faults, greater than any that have since illustrated the Poetic Drama of

England. Popular during their lives, three or four of them even as late as the close of the seventeenth century, and forgotten or neglected in the eighteenth century, they are now estimated at their true value, and have the place which belongs to them among the English poets. This restoration to their poetic rights was largely due to a clerk in the India House,—a lover of antiquity, for which he jestingly said he wrote, the author of John Woodvil, a Tragedy, who seventy-five years ago (1808) published a volume of Specimens from their works. He read them more understandingly than any man of his time, and when he ventured to criticise them, which was seldom, his criticisms were weighty indeed. Of Shirley, for example, he says that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and emotions in common. Of Massinger he says that he had not the higher requisites of his art in anything like the degree in which they were possessed by Ford, Webster, Tourneur, Heywood, and others. "He never shakes or disturbs the mind with grief. He is read with composure and placid delight. He wrote with that equability of all the passions which made his English style the purest and most free from violent metaphors and harsh constructions of any of the dramatists who were his contemporaries." Of The Poetaster, a satirical comedy directed against Dekker and others, he says: "This Roman Play seems written to confute those enemies of Ben Jonson, in his own day and ours, who have said that he made a pedantical use of his learning. He has here revived the whole court of Augustus by a learned spell. We are admitted to the

society of the illustrious dead. Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, converse in our own tongue more finely and poetically than they expressed themselves in their native Latin. Nothing can be imagined more elegant, refined, and court-like, than the scenes between this Lewis the Fourteenth of Antiquity and his Literati. The whole essence of that kind of intercourse is contained therein." Of Ford he says: "Ford was of the first order of Poets. He sought for sublimity not by parcels in metaphors or visible images, but directly where she has her full residence—in the heart of man; in the acts and sufferings of the greatest minds." Of Webster he says: "To move a horror skilfully, to touch a soul to the quick, to lay upon fear as much as it can bear, to wean and weary a life until it is ready to drop, and then step in with mortal instruments to take its last forfeit: this only a Webster can do." And of Webster's famous Dirge in The White Devil ("Call for the Robin red-breast and the Wren"), he says rapturously: "I never saw anything like this Dirge, except the Ditty which reminds Ferdinand of his drowned Father in the Tempest. As that is of the water, watery, so this is of the earth, earthy. Both have that intenseness of feeling which seems to resolve itself into the elements which it contemplates." He quotes largely from Beaumont and Fletcher, and in commenting upon the poetic qualities of the latter, as contrasted with those of Shakespeare, in their joint production The Two Noble Kinsmen, he says: "His ideas moved slow; his versification, though sweet, is tedious, it stops every moment; he lays line upon line, making up one after the other, adding image to image so deliberately that we see where they

join. Shakespeare mingles everything, he runs line into line, embarrasses sentences and metaphors; before one idea has burst its shell, another is hatched and clamorous for disclosure." And a friend of this friend of ours, this clerk in the India House, a dramatist, and a dramatic critic, a journalist, and a poet, has something to say about Fletcher and Beaumont, in a volume of specimens from both which is worth quoting. Here it is: "Beaumont and Fletcher were two born poets, possessed of a noble and tender imagination, of great fancy and wit, and of an excess of companionability and animal spirits, which, by taking them off from study, was their ruin. They had not patience to construct a play like Ben Jonson, yet their sensibility and their purer vein of poetry have set them above him, even as dramatists. By the side of merely conventional or artificial poets they are demigods; by the side of Shakespeare they were striplings, who never arrived at years of discretion. Yet even as such, they show themselves of ethereal race; and as lyrical poets they surpassed even Shakespeare. There was nothing to compare with their songs, for tenderness and sweetness, till the appearance of Percy's Reliques—and some of the best touches even of those were found to be from their hands." After Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb who can hope to say anything worth listening to concerning the English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakespeare?

R. H. STODDARD.

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DRAMATIC SCENES

AND

CHARACTERS

WHOSE END, both at the first, and now, was and is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to Nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.
—SHAKESPEARE.

Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives,
Alcestis rises from the Shades:
Verse calls them forth; 'tis Verse that gives
Immortal youth.

—LANDOR.

Dramatic Scenes and Characters.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

1340—1400.

THE PROLOGUE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES.

When that Aprilè with his showèrs swoote
The drought of March hath piercèd to the root,
And bathèd every vein in such liquòr
Of which virtue engender'd is the flower;
When Zephyrus eke with his sweetè breath
Inspired hath in every holt and heath
The tender croppès, and the youngè sun
Hath in the Ram his halfè course y-run,
And smallè fowlès maken melody,
That sleepen all the night with open eye,
So pricketh them natùre in their couràges :—
Then longen folk to go on pilgrimages,
And palmers for to seeken strangè strands,
To fernè hallows, kouthe in sundry lands;
And specially from every shire's end
Of Engèland to Canterbury they wend,
The holy blissful martyr for to seek
That them hath holpen when that they were sick.
  Befell that, in that season on a day,
In Southwark at the Tabard as I lay,
Ready to wenden on my pilgrimage

To Canterbury with full devout couràge,
At night was come into that hostelry
Well nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry folk by àdventure y-fall
In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all
That toward Canterbury woulden ride.
The chambers and the stables weren wide,
And well we weren easèd at the best:
And shortly, when the sunnè was to rest,
So had I spoken with them every one,
That I was of their fellowship anon;
And madè forward early for to rise,
To take our way there as I you devise.
But ne'ertheless, while I have time and space,
Or that I further in this talè pace,
Methinketh it accordant to reasòn
To tellen you all the conditiòn
Of each of them, so as it seemed me,
And which they weren, and of what degree,
And eke in what array that they were in;
And at a knight then will I first begin.
A KNIGHT there was, and that a worthy man,
That from the timè that he first began
To riden out, he lovèd chivalry,
Truth and honoùr, freedom and courtesy.
Full worthy was he in his lordès war,
And thereto had he ridden, no man far,
As well in Christendom as in heathenesse,
And ever honour'd for his worthiness.
At Alisandre he was when it was won;
Full oftè time he had the bord bygone
Aboven allè natìons in Prusse;
In Lettow had he raided and in Russe,
No christian man so oft of his degree;
In Grenade, at the siège had he be
Of Algezir, and ridden in Belmarie;

At Lièys was he, and at Satalie,
When they were won; and in the Greatè Sea
At many a noble arrival had he be;
At mortal battles had he been fifteen,
And foughten for our faith at Tramassene
In listès thrice, and [ever] slain his foe.
This ilkè worthy Knight had been also
Sometimè with the lord of Palatye
Against another heathen in Turkèy;
And evermore he had a sovereign price.
And though that he was worthy, he was wise,
And of his port as meek as is a maid.
He never yet no villainy ne said
In all his life unto no manner [of] wight.
He was a very perfect gentle knight.
But for to tellen you of his array:
His horse was good, but he ne was nought gay;
Of fustian he weared a gepoun
Allè besmutted with his habergeon,
For he was late y-come from his voyage,
And wentè for to do his pilgrimage.
With him there was his son, a young SQUIÈR,
A lover and a lusty batcheler,
With locks curly as they were laid in press.
Of twenty years of age he was, I guess.
Of his stature he was of even length,
And wonderly deliver, and great of strength.
And he had been sometime in chevachie,
In Flanders, in Artois, and Picardy,
And borne him well, as of so little space,
In hope to standen in his lady's grace.
Embroider'd was he, as it were a mead
All full of freshè flowers, white and red;
Singing he was, or fluting, all the day:
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gown, with sleevès long and wide.

Well could he sit on horse and fairly ride.
He couldè songès make and well indite ;
Joust, and eke dance, and well pourtray and write.
So hot he lovèd that by nightertale
He slept no more than doth a nightingale.
Courteous he was, lowly, and serviceable ;
And carved before his father at the table.
A YEOMAN had he, and servànts no mo
At that time, for him lustè riden so.
And he was clad in coat and hood of green.
A sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen
Under his belt he bare full thriftily :
Well could he dress his tackle yeomanly :
His arrows drooped nought with feathers low.
And in his hand he bare a mighty bow.
A nut-head had he, with a brown visàge.
Of wood-craft well could he all the usàge.
Upon his arm he bare a gay bracèr,
And by his side a sword and a bucklèr,
And on that other side a gay daggèr,
Harnessed well and sharp as point of spear;
A Christopher on his breast, of silver sheen.
An horn he bare,—the bauldric was of green :
A forester was he soothly, as I guess.
There was also a Nun, a PRIORESS,
That of her smiling was full simple and coy:
Her greatest oath was but by saint Eloy :
And she was clepèd Madame Eglantine.
Full well she sang the servicè divine,
Entunèd in her nose full sweetèly ;
And French she spake full fair and featously,—
After the school of Stratford at the Bow,
For French of Paris was to her unknow.
At meatè well y-taught was she withal :
She let no morsel from her lippès fall,
Nor wet her fingers in her saucer deep;

Well could she carry a morsel, and well keep
That no droppè ne fell upon her breast:
In courtesy was set full much her lest.
Her over-lippè wipèd she so clean,
That in her cuppè was no farthing seen
Of greasè, when she drunken had her draught;
Full seemèly after her meat she raught;
And sikerly she was of great disport,
And full pleasànt, and amiable of port;
And pained her to counterfeiten cheer
Of Court and be estately of mannèr,
And to be holden digne of reverence.
But for to speaken of her consciènce,
She was so charitable and so piteous
She wouldè weep if that she saw a mouse
Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled.
Of smallè houndès had she, that she fed
With roasted flesh, or milk, and wastel bread;
But sore wept she if one of them were dead,
Or if men smote it with a yerdè smart:
And all was consciènce and tender heart.
Full seemèly her wimple pinched was;
Her nose tretys, her eyèn grey as glass,
Her mouth full small and thereto soft and red;
But sikerly she had a fair forehead,—
It was almost a spannè broad, I trow,
For hardèly she was not undergrow.
Full featous was her cloak, as I was ware.
Of small coràl about her arm she bare
A pair of beadès gauded all with green;
And thereon hung a brooch of gold full sheen,
On which was first y-writ a crowned A,
And after, "Amor vincit omnia."
Another Nun [also] with her had she,
That was her chapèlaine, and Priestès three.

A MONK there was, a fair for the mastery,

An out-rider, that lovèd venery;
A manly man, to be an abbot able.
Full many a dainty horse had he in stable;
And when he rode men might his bridle hear
Jingling in a whistling wind as clear
And eke as loud as doth the chapel bell.
There as this lord was keeper of the cell,
The rule of Saint Maur or of Saint Bene't,
Because that it was old and some deal straight,
This ilke Monk let [as] old thingès pace,
And held after the newè world the space.
He gave not of that text a pullèd hen,
That saith that hunters be none holy men;
Ne that a monk, when he is recchèless,
Is liken'd to a fish is waterless:
This is to say, a monk out of his cloister.
But thilkè text he held not worth an oyster.
And I say, his opinion was good.
What should he study, and make himselven wood,
Upon a book in cloister alway to pore;
Or swynkè with his handès, and laboùr,
As Austin bade? How shall the world be served?
Let Austin have his swynk to him reserved!
Therefore he was a pricasour aright.
Greyhounds he had as swift as fowl in flight;
Of pricking, and of hunting for the hare,
Was all his lust, for no cost would he spare.
I saw his sleeves purfilèd at the hand
With grys, and that the finest of the land.
And for to fasten his hood under his chin
He had of gold y-wrought a curious pin:
A love-knot in the greater end there was.
His head was bald, that shone as any glass;
And eke his face as he had been anoint.
He was a lord full fat and in good point;
His eyèn steep and rolling in his head,

That steamed as a furnace of a lead;
His bootès supple, his horse in great estate.
Now certainly he was a fair prelàte;
He was not pale as a forpinèd ghost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roast;
His palfrey was as brown as is a berry.
A FRIAR there was, a wanton and a merry,
A limitour, [and] a full solemn man:
In all the orders four is none that can
So much of dalliance and fair languàge.
He had y-made full many a marriàge
Of youngè women, at his ownè cost.
Unto his order he was a noble post.
Full well beloved, familiar was he
With franklins over-all in his countrỳ;
And eke with worthy women of the town:
For he had power of confessiòn,
As saidè himself, more than a curàte,
For of his order he was licenciate.
Full sweetèly he heard confession,
And pleasant was his absolutiòn;
He was an easy man to give penànce
There as he wist [to] have a good pittànce,—
For unto a poor order for to give
Is signè that a man is well y-shrive.
For if he gave, he durst [to] make a vaunt
He wistè that a man was repentànt.
For many a man so hard is of his heart,
He may not weepè although him sore smart:
Therefore instead of weeping and prayèrs
Men must give silver to the poor friàrs.
His tippet was aye farsèd full of knives
And pinnès for to give [unto] fair wives.
And certainly he had a merry note;
Well could he sing and play [up] on a rote;
Of yeddings he bare utterly the prize.

His neckè white was as the fleur-de-lys.
Thereto he strong was as a champion.
He knew the taverns well in every town,
And every hosteler and tappestere,
But then a lazar or a beggestere,
For unto such a worthy man as he
Accorded not, as by his faculty,
To haven with such lazars acquaintance.
It is not honest, it may not advance,
For to dealen with no such poraille;
But all with rich and sellers of vitaille.
And over all, there as profit should arise,
Courteous he was, and lowly of servìce:
There was no man no where so virtuous.
He was the bestè beggar in his house:
And gave a certain farmè for the grant
None of his bretheren came in his haunt:
For though a widow haddè not one shoe,
So pleasant was his "In principio,"
Yet would he have a farthing ere he went.
His purchase was well better than his rent.
And rage he could as it were right a whelp.
In love-dayès there could he muchel help:
For there he was not like a cloisterer,
With threadbare cope as is a poor scholàr,
But he was like a master or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,
That rounded as a bell out of the press.
Somewhat he lisped, for his wantonness,
To make his English sweet upon his tongue;
And in his harping, when that he had sung,
His eyèn twinkled in his head aright
As do the starrès in the frosty night.
This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

A MERCHANT was there, with a forked beard,
In motèley, and high on horse he sat;

Upon his head a Flemish beaver hat,
His bootès clasped fair and featously.
His reasons he spake full solemnèly,
Sounding alway the increase of his winning.
He would the sea were kept for any thing
Betwixt Middèlborough and Orèwell.
Well could he in exchangè scheeldès sell.
This worthy man full well his wit beset;
There wistè no wight that he was in debt,
So estately was he of governànce
With his bargàins and with his chevysaunce.
Forsooth he was a worthy man withal;
But, sooth to say, I n'ot how men him call.
A CLERK there was of Oxenford also,
That unto logic haddè long y-go.
As leanè was his horse as is a rake;
And he was not right fat, I undertake,
But looked hollow, and thereto soberly.
Full thread-bare was his overest-courtepy,
For he had getten him yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly as to have office:
For him was liefer have at his bed's head
A twenty bookès clad in black or red
Of Aristotle and his philosophy
Than robes rich, or fiddèl, or gay psaltery;
But albeit that he was philosopher,
Yet had he but littèl gold in coffèr;
But all that he might of his friendès hent
On bookès and on learning he it spent,
And busily gan for the soulès pray
Of them that gave him wherewith to scholay.
Of study took he most cure and most heed.
Not one word spake he more than [there] was need;
And that was said in form and reverence,
And short and quick, and full of high sentènce.
Sounding in moral virtue was his speech,

And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.
A SERGEANT OF THE LAW, wary and wise,
That often haddè been at the parvys,
There was also, full rich of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of great reverence:
He seemed such, his words weren so wise.
Justice he was full often in assize,
By patent and by plein commissiòn;
For his science and for his high renown,
Of fees and robès had he many one.
So great a purchaser was no-where known.
All was fee simple to him in effect,
His purchasing mightè nought be infect.
Nowhere so busy a man as he there n'as;
And yet he seemed busier than he was.
In term-[time] had he cases and dooms all
That from the time of king Williàm were fall:
Thereto he could indite, and make a thing
There could no wight [to] pinch at his writìng;
And every statute could he plein by rote.
He rode but homely in a medley coat,
Girt with a seynt of silk with barrès smale.
Of his array tell I no longer tale.
A FRANKLIN [there] was in his company:
White was his beard as is the daìsy;
Of his complexiòn he was sanguìne.
Well loved he by the morrow a sop in wine.
To liven in delight was all his wone,
For he was Epicurus' owen son,
That held opinìon that plein delight
Was verily felicity perfyt.
An householder, and that a great, was he;
Saint Julià̀n he was in his countrỳ.
His bread, his ale, was alway after one;
A better envined man was nowhere known.
Withouten bakèd meat was never his house,

[And] flesh and fish, and that so plenteous,
It snowed in his house of meat and drink
Of allè dainties that men couldè think.
After the sundry seasons of the year,
So changèd he his meat and his supper.
Full many a fat partridge had he in mew,
And many a bream and many a luce in stew.
Woe was his cook, but-if his sauces were
Poignant and sharp, and ready all his gear.
His table, dormant in his hall alway,
Stood ready cover'd all the longè day.
At sessiòns, there was he lord and sire;
Full oftè time he was knight of the shire.
An anlace and a gipser all of silk
Hung at his girdle white as morning milk.
A sheriff had he been, and a comptour:
Was nowhere such a worthy vavasour!
An HABERDASHER, and a CARPENTER,
A WEAVER, DYER, and a TAPISER:
And they were clothed all in one livery
Of a solemn and a great fraternity.
Full fresh and new their gear apikèd was;
Their knivès were y-chapèd not with brass,
But all with silver wrought, full clean and well,
Their girdles and their pouches every del.
Well seemed each of them a fair burgess
To sitten in a guild-hall on a dais.
Every one for the wisdom that he can
Was shapely for to be an alderman.
For chattel haddè they enough, and rent,
And eke their wivès would it well assent:
And ellis certain weren they to blame.
It is full fair to be y-cleped Madame,
And for to go to vigils all before
And have a mantle royal-like upbore.
A COOK they [there] had with them for the nones,

To boilen chickens, with the mary bones,
And powder-merchant tart, and galingale.
Well could he know a draught of London ale;
He couldè roast, and seethe, and broil, and fry,
Maken mortrews, and well baken a pie:
But great harm was it, as it thoughtè me,
That on his shin a mort-mal haddè he.
For blancmanger, that made he with the best.
A SHIP-MAN was there, wonning far by West:
For aught I wot, he was [out] of Dartmouth.
He rode upon a rouncy as he couthe
[All] in a gown of falding to the knee.
A dagger hanging on a lace had he
About his neck under his arm adown.
The hot summer had made his hue all brown.
And certainly he was a good fellaw.
Full many a draught of wine he had y-draw
From Bordeaux-ward while that the chapmen sleep;
Of nicè consciènce took he no keep,
If that he fought and had the higher hand,
By water he sent them home to every land.
But of his craft to reckon well his tides,
His streamès, and his dangers him besides,
His harbour, and his moon, his lodemenage,
There was none such from Hull [un]to Carthage.
Hardy he was, and wise to undertake;
With many a tempest had his beard been shake.
He knew well all the heavens, as they were,
From Jutland to the Cape of Finisterre,
And every creek in Bretagne and in Spain.
His barge y-clepèd was the Madelaine.
With us there was a DOCTOR OF PHYSIC.
In all this world ne was there none him like
To speak of physic and of surgery:
For he was grounded in astronomy.
He kept his patiènt wonderly well

In hourès by his magic naturel.
Well could he fortunen the àscendant
Of his imàges for his patiènt.
He knew the cause of every malady,
Were it of hot, or cold, or moist, or dry,
And where engender'd, and of what humoùr:
He was a very perfect practisoùr.
The cause y-known, and of his harm the root,
Anon he gave the sickè man his boot.
Full ready had he his apothecaries
To send him drugs and his electuaries,—
For each of them made other for to win:
Their friendship was not newè to begin.
Well knew he the old Æsculapius,
And Dioscorides, and eke Rufus,
Old Hippocras, Haly, and Galièn,
Serapion, Rhasis, and Avicèn,
Averroes, Damascene, and Constantine,
Bernard, and Gatèsden, and Gilbertyn.
Of his diètè measurable was he,—
For it was of no superfluity,
But of great nourishing and digestìble.
His study was but little on the Bible,
In sanguine and in pers he clad was all,
Linèd with taffeta and with sendàl.
And yet he was but easy of dispense:
He keptè that he won in pestilence.
For gold in physic is a cordial:
Therefore he lovèd gold in special.
A good WIFE was there, of by side [of] Bath;
But she was some deal deaf, and that was scathe.
Of cloth-making she haddè such a haunt,
She passed them of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In all the parish wife ne was there none
That to the offering before her should gone;
And if there did, certain so wroth was she

That she was out of allè charity.
Her coverchiefs full fine weren of ground,—
I durstè swear they weigheden ten pound
That on a Sunday were upon her head.
Her hosen weren of fine scarlet red,
Full strait y-tied, and shoes full moist and new.
Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.
She was a worthy woman all her life;
Husbands at churchè door she haddè five,
Withouten other company in youth:
But thereof needeth not to speak as nouthe.
And thrice she had been at Jerusalem;
She haddè passed many a strangè stream:
At Rome she haddè been, and at Bologne;
In Galice at Saint James, and at Cologne:
She couldè much of wandering by the way.
Gap-toothed was she, soothly for to say.
Upon an ambler easily she sat,
Y-wimpled well, and on her head a hat
As broad as is a buckler or a targe;
A foot-mantle about her hippès large,
And on her feet a pair of spurrès sharp.
In fellowship well could she laugh and carp.
Of remedies of love she knew perchance,
For of that art she could the oldè dance.
A good man was there, of religiòn,
That was a poorè PARSON of a town;
But rich he was of holy thought and work.
He was also a learned man, a clerk
That Christès gospel truèly would preach;
His parishions devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversity full patiènt;
And such he was y-provèd often sithes.
Full loath were him to cursen for his tithes,
But rather would he given out of doubt

Unto his poorè parishions about
Of his offering, and eke of his substànce.
He could in little thing have suffisànce.
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,
But he ne leftè not, for rain nor thunder,
In sickness nor in mischief to visite
The farthest in his parish, much and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
This noble ensample to his sheep he gaf:
That first he wrought and afterward he taught.
Out of the Gospel he those wordès caught;
And this figùre he added eke thereto,
That if gold rusteth, what shall iron do?
For if a priest be foul, on whom we trust,
No wonder is a lewèd man to rust;
And shame it is, if that a priest take keep,
To see a [befoul'd] shepherd and clean sheep:
Well ought a priest ensample for to give,
By his cleanness, how that his sheep should live.
He settè not his benefice to hire,
And let his sheep encumber'd in the mire,
And ran to London, unto Saintè Paul's
To seeken him a chantery for souls,
Or with a brotherhood to been withhold;
But dwelt at home, and keptè well his fold,
So that the wolf ne made it not miscarry:
He was a shepherd, and no mercenary.
And though he holy were, and virtuous,
He was to sinful man nought despitous,
Ne of his speechè dangerous nor digne;
But in his teaching discreet and benign.
To drawen folk to heaven by fairnèss,
By good ensample, this was his businèss;
But it were any person obstinate,
What so he were, of high or low estate,
Him would he snubben sharply for the nones.

A better priest, I trow, there nowhere none is.
He waited [on] no pomp and reverence,
Nor makèd him a spicèd consciènce.
But Christès lore, and his apostles' twelve,
He taught: but first he follow'd it himself.
With him there was a PLOUGHMAN, was his brother;
That had y-led of dung full many a fother.
A [right] true swinker, and a good, was he,
Living in peace and perfect charity.
God loved he best, with all [of] his whole heart.
At allè timès, though him gamed or smart;
And then his neighèbour right as himself.
He woulden thresh, and thereto dyke and delve,
For Christès sake, with every poorer wight,
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.
His tithès payed he full fair and well,
Both of his ownè swink and his cattèl.
In a tabard he rode upon a mare.
There was also a Reeve, and a Millèr,
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also,
A Manciple, and myself: there were no mo.
The MILLER was a stout churl for the nones:
Full big he was of brawn, and eke of bones,
That provèd well, for over all there he came,—
At wrestling he would have alway the ram.
He was short-shoulder'd, broad, a thick-set gnarr:
There was no door that he['d not] heave of harre,
Or break it at a running with his head.
His beard as any sow or fox was red,
And thereto broad, as though it were a spade;
Upon the cop right of his nose he had
A wart, and thereon stood a tuft of hairs
Red as the bristles of a sowès ears;
His nosè-thurlès black weren and wide;
A sword and buckler bare he by his side;
His mouth as wide was as a great furnace;

He was a jangler and a golyardeys,
And that was most of sin and harlotries;
Well could he steelen corn and tollen thrice,
And yet he had a thumb of gold, pardê.
A white coat and a blue hood weared he.
A baggèpipe well could he blow and soun';
And therewithal he brought us out of town.
A gentle MANCIPLE was there, of a temple,
Of which achatours mighten take exemple
For to be wise in buying of vitaille:
For whether that he paid or took by taille,
Alway he waytèd so in his achate
That he was aye before and in good state.
Now is not that of God a full fair grace,
That such a lewêd mannê's wit shall pace
The wisdom of an heap of learned men?
Of masters had he more than thriès ten,
That were of law expert and curious,
Of which there were a dozen in that house
Worthy to be stewàrds of rent and land
Of any lord that is in Engèland,
To maken him live by his proper good,
In honour, debtless, but-if he were wood;
Or live as scarcely as him list desire,
And able for to helpen all a shire
In any case that mighten fall or hap:
And yet this Manciple set all their cap.
The REEVE, [he] was a slender choleric man.
His beard was shaven as nigh as ever he can;
His hair was by his ears full round y-shorn;
His top was docked like a priest beforne;
Full longê were his leggès and full lean,
Y-like a staff, there was no calf y-seen.
Well could he keep a garner and a binn;
There was no auditor could on him win.
Well wist he, by the drought, and by the rain,

The yielding of his seed, and of his grain.
His lordès sheep, his cattle, his dairỳ,
His swine, his horse, his store, and his poultrỳ,
Was wholly in this Reevè's governing,
And by his covenant gave the reckoning
Since that his lord was twenty years of age;
There could no man bring him in arrierage.
There was no bailiff, herd, nor other hine,
That he knew not his sleight and his covine:
They were in dread of him, as of the death.
His dwelling was full fair upon an heath;
With greenè trees y-shadow'd was his place.
He couldè better than his lord purchàse.
Full rich he was, astorèd privily;
His lord well could he pleasen subtilly.
To give and lend him of his ownè good,
And have a thank, and yet a coat, and hood.
In youth he learned had a good mastèr;
He was a well good wright, a carpenter.
This Reeve, [he] sat upon a full good stot,
That was all pommely grey, and hightè Scot.
A long surcoat of pers upon he had,
And by his side he bare a rusty blade.
Of Norfolk was this Reeve of which I tell,
Beside a town men clepen Baldeswell.
Tucked he was, as is a friar, about;
And ever he rode the hinderest of the rout.

A SOMPNOUR was there with us in that place,
That had a fire-red cherubimès face,
For sawcèflem he was, with eyèn narrow.
As hot he was and lecherous as a sparrow;
With skallèd browès black and pilèd beard;
Of his visàge [the] children were afear'd.
There was no quicksilver, litharge, brimstòne,
Borax, ceruce, nor oil of tartar none,
Nor ointèment that woulden cleanse and bite,

That might him helpen of his pimples white,
Nor of the knobbès sitting on his cheeks.
Well loved he garlick, onions, and eke leeks,
And for to drinken strong wine red as blood;
Then would he speak and cry as he were wood;
And when that he well drunken had the wine,
Then would he speak no word but in Latìn.
A fewè termès had he, two or three,
That he had learned out of some decree,—
No wonder is, he heard it all the day,—
And also ye know well how that a jay
Can [call out] Wat! as well can the pope;
But whoso could in other thing him grope,
Then he had spent all his philosophy:
Ay, "Questio quid juris?" would he cry.
He was a gentle harlot, and a kind;
A better fellow shouldè men not find:
He wouldè suffer for a quart of wine
A good fellow to have his concubine
A twelvemonth, and excuse him at the full;
And privily a finch eke could he pull.
And if he found onewhere a good fellaw,
He wouldè teachen him to have no awe
In such a case of the archdeacon's curse,
But-if a mannès soul were in his purse,—
For in his purse he should y-punish'd be.
"[The] purse is the archdeacon's hell," quoth he.
But well I wot he lièd right indeed:
Of cursing ought each guilty man him dread,
For curse will slay right as assoiling saveth;
And also ware him of a "significavit."
In danger had he at his ownè guise
The youngè [children] of the diocese,
And knew their counsel, and was all their rede.
A garland had he set upon his head,
As great as it were for an alè-stake;

A buckler had he made him of a cake.
With him there rode a gentle PARDONER,
Of Rouncivale, his friend and his compere,
That straight was comen from the Court of Rome.
Full loud he sung—"Come hither, Love! to me;"
This Sompnour bare to him a stiff burdoun,—
Was never trump of half so great a soun'.
This Pardoner had hair as yellow as wax;
But smooth it hung as doth a strike of flax,
By unces hung his lockès that he had,
And therewith he his shoulders oversprad,—
Full thin it lay, by culpons one and one;
But hood, for jollity, he wearèd none,
For it was trussed up in his wallèt.
Him thought he rode all of the new[est] get,
Dischevel'd, save his cap he rode all bare.
Such glaring eyèn had he as an hare.
A Vernicle had he sewn upon his cap;
His wallet lay before him in his lap
Brim-full of pardons come from Rome all hot.
A voice he had as small as any goat;
No beard had he, nor never shouldè have,—
As smooth it was as it were late y-shave,
I trow [but little of a man were there.]
But of his craft, from Berwick into Ware,
Ne was there such another pardoner.
For in his mail he had a pillow-beer
Which that, [so] said he, was Our Lady's veil;
He said he had a gobbet of the sail,
[The same] Saint Peter had when that he went
Upon the sea, till Jesu Christ him hent;
He had a cross of latoun full of stones;
And in a glass he had [a] piggès bones.
But with these relics, when [so] that he found
A poorè parson dwelling upon land,
Upon a day he gat him more monèy

Than that the parson gat in moneths tway:
And thus, with feigned flattery and japes,
He made the parson and the people his apes.
But truèly to tellen at the last,
He was in church a noble ecclesiast.
Well could he read a lesson or a story,
But all the best he sang an offertory:
For well he wist, when [so] that song was sung
He mustè preach, and well affile his tongue
To winnè silver, as he right well could.
Therefore he sang full merrily and loud.
  Now have I told you shortly in a clause
The state, the array, the number, and eke the cause
Why that assembled was this company
In Southwark at this gentle hostelry
That hight the Tabard, fast [beside] the Bell.
But now [the] time is to you for to tell
How that we bare us in that ilkè night
When we were in that hostelry alight;
And after will I tell of our viage,
And all the remnant of our pilgrimage.
But first, I pray you of your courtesy
That ye ne rette it not my villainy,
Though that I plainly speak in this mattèr
To tellen you their wordès and their cheer;
Nor though I speak their wordès properly.
For this ye knowen also well as I,
Whoso shall tell a tale after a man,
He must rehearse as nigh as ever he can
Every one word, if it be in his charge,
All speak he never so rudèly and large;
Or ellès he must tell his tale untrue,
Or feignè thing, or findè wordès new:
He may not spare although he were his brother:
He might as well say one word as another.
Christ spake himself full broad in Holy Writ,

And well ye wot no villainy is it.
Eke Plato saith, whoso that can him read,
The wordès must be cousin to the deed.
Also I pray you to forgive it me
All have I not set folk in their degree
Here in this tale as that they shouldè stand :
My wit is short, ye well may understand.
  Great cheèr made our Host us every one ;
And to the supper set he us anon,
And servèd us with victual at the best ;
Strong was the wine, and well to drink us lest.
A seemly man our Host he was withal
For to have been a marshal in an hall,—
A largè man he was, with eyèn steep,—
A fairer burgess was there none in Chepe ;
Bold of his speech, and wise and well y-taught,
And of manhood him lacked rightè nought ;
Eke thereto he was right a merry man.
And after supper plain[ly] he began,
And spake of mirth amongès other things,
When that we haddè made our reckonings ;
And saidè thus : " Lo, Lordings ! truèly
Ye be to me right welcome heartily :
For by my troth, if that I shall not lie,
I saw not this year so merry a company
At once in this harborough as is now.
Fain would I do you mirth, [if] wist I how.
And of a mirth I am right now bethought,
To do you ease, and it shall cost you nought.
Ye go to Canterbury : God you speed !
The blissful Martyr [re]quite you your meed !
And well I wot, as ye go by the way,
Ye shapen you to tellen and to play,—
For truèly comfort nor mirth is none
To riden by the way dumb as a stone ;
And therefore will I maken you disport,

As I said erst, and do you some comfòrt;
And if you liketh all by one assent
Now for to standen at my judgèment,
And for to worken as I shall you say,
To-morrow, when ye riden by the way,
Now by my father's soulè that is dead,
But ye be merry I will give you mine head.
Hold up your hand withouten more [of] speech!"
Our counsel was not longè for to seche;
Us thought it was not worth to make it wise,
And granted him withouten more advise,
And bade him say his verdict as him leste.
"Lordings!" quoth he,—"now hearken for the best;
But take it not, I pray you, in disdain!
This is the point, to speaken short and plain:
That each of you, to shorten with our way
In this viage, shall tellen [his] tales tway,
To Canterbury-ward—I mean it so,
And homeward he shall tellen other two,
Of àdventures that whilome have befall;
And which of you that beareth him best of all,
That is to say, that telleth in this case
Tales of best sentence and [of] most solàce,
Shall have a supper at our alther cost,
Here in this place, y-sitting by this post,
When that we come again from Canterbury.
And for to maken you the [yet] more merry,
I will myselven gladly with you ride,
Right at mine owen cost, and be your guide.
And whoso will my judgèment withsay
Shall pay all that we spenden by the way.
And if ye vouchèsafe that it be so,
Tell me anon, withouten wordès mo!
And I will early shapen me therefore."
This thing was granted, and our oaths [we] swore
With full glad heart, and prayèd him also

That he would vouchêsafe for to do so,
And that he wouldè be our governòr,
And of our tales [the] judge and rèporter,
And set a supper at a certain price ;
And we would rulèd be at his device
In high and low ; and thus by one assent
We been accorded to his judgèment.
And thereupon the wine was fetch'd anon ;
We drunken, and to rest went every one
Withouten any longer tarrying.
A morrow, when the day began to spring,
Up rose our Host, and was our alther cock,
And gather'd us together all in a flock,
And forth we ridden, a little more than pace,
Unto the watering of Saint Thomàs.
And there our Host began his horse arrest,
And saiden : "Lordès ; hearken if you leste.
Ye wot you're forward, and I it you record.
If even-song and morrow-song accord,
Let see now who shall tellen first a tale !
As ever might I drinken wine or ale,
Whoso be rebel to my judgèment
Shall pay for all that by the way is spent.
Now draweth cut, ere that we farther twynne !
He which that hath the shortest shall begin."
"Sir Knight !" quoth he,—"my master and my lord !
Now draweth cut ! for that is mine accord."
"Cometh near," quoth he,—"my lady Prioress !
And ye, sir Clerk ! let be your shamefastness,
Ne studieth not !" "Lay hand to, every man !"
Anon to drawen every wight began ;
And shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by àdventure, or sort, or case,
The sooth is this, the cut fell to the Knight :
Of which full blithe and glad was every wight :
And tell he must his tale as was reasòn,

By forward and by compositiòn,
As ye have heard. What needeth wordès mo?
And when this good man saw that it was so,
And that he wise was, and obedièn̂t
To keep his forward by his free assent,
He saiden: "Since I shall begin the game,
What, welcome be thou, cut! a Goddès name.
Now let us ride, and hearken what I say!"
And with that word we ridęn forth our way,
And he began with right a merry cheer
His tale anon——

JOHN SKELTON.

1461?—1529.

MAGNIFICENCE.

MAGNIFICENCE, *having with him* FELICITY *and* LIBERTY *under the stewardship of* MEASURE, *is misled by* FANCY *to* FOLLY, *falls into bad hands, and has to be reclaimed by* ADVERSITY *and* POVERTY.

Here enters MAGNIFICENCE. *With him* MEASURE, FELICITY, LIBERTY.

Mag. To assure you of my noble port and fame,
Who list to know, Magnificence I hight.
But, Measure, my friend! what hight this mannès name?
Meas. Sir! though ye be a noble prince of might,
Yet in this man [Felicity] you must set your delight;
And, Sir! this other man's name is Liberty.
Mag. Welcome, friendès! ye are both unto me.
But now let me know of your conversation!
Felic. Pleaseth your Grace, Felicity they me call.
Lib. And I am Liberty, made of in every nation.
Mag. Convenient persons for any prince royàl!
Wealth with Liberty, with me both dwell ye shall,—
To the guidance of my Measure you both committing.
That Measure be master, us seemeth it is sitting.
Meas. Whereas ye have, sir! to me them assign'd,

Such order I trust with them for to take
So that Wealth with Measure shall be combined,
And Liberty his large with Measure shall make.
Felic. Your ordinance, sir! I will not forsake.
Lib. And I myself wholly to you will incline.
Mag. Then may I say that ye be servants mine:
For by Measure, I warn you, we think to be guided,—
Wherein it is necessary my pleasure you know.
Measure and I will never be divided
For no discord that any man can [sow].
For Measure is a mean, neither too high nor too low,
In whose attemperance I have such delight
That Measure shall never depart from my sight.
Felic. Laudable your conceit is to be accounted,
For Wealth without Measure suddenly will slide.
Lib. As your Grace full nobly hath recounted,
Measure with Nobleness should be allied.
Mag. Then, Liberty! see that Measure be your guide,—
For I will use you by his advertisement.
Felic. Then shall you have with you Prosperity resident.
Meas. I trow good fortune hath annex'd us together,
To see how greable we are of one mind:
There is no flatterer nor losell so lither
This linked chain of love that can unbind.
Now that ye have me chief ruler assign'd,
I will endeavor me to order every thing
Your nobleness and honour concerning.
Lib. In joy and mirth your life shall be enlargèd,
And not embraced with pusillanimity;
But plenarly all thought from you dischargèd,
If ye list to live after your free Liberty.
All delectation acquainted is with me,
By me all persons worken what they list.
Meas. Ahem! sir! yet beware of Had-I-wist!
Liberty in some cause becometh a gentle mind,
By cause course of Measure, if I be in the way.

Who counteth without me is cast too far behind
Of his reckoning, as evidently we may
See at our eye the world [in], day by day.
For default of Measure all thing doth exceed.

Felic. All that ye say is as true as the Creed:
For howbeit Liberty to Wealth is convenient,
And from Felicity may not be forborne,
Yet Measure hath been so long from us absent,
That all men laugh at Liberty to scorn;
Wealth and Wit, I say, be so threadbare worn,
That all is without Measure and far beyond the moon.

Mag. Then Nobleness, I see well, is almost undone,—
But-if thereof the sooner amends be made:
For doubtless I perceive my Magnificence
Withouten Measure lightèly may fade,
Of too much Liberty under the offence.
Wherefore, Measure! take Liberty with you hence,
And rule him after the rule of your school!

Lib. What, sir! would ye make me a popping fool?

Meas. Why, were not yourself agreed to the same,
And now would swerve from your own ordinance?

Lib. I would be rulèd, and I might, for shame.

Felic. Eh! ye make me laugh at your inconstànce.

Mag. Sir! without any longer dalliance
Take Liberty to rule, and follow mine intent!

Meas. It shall be done at your commandèment.

Here MEASURE *goes out with* LIBERTY, *and* MAGNIFICENCE *remains with* FELICITY.

Mag. It is a wanton thing, this Liberty.
Perceive you not how loath he was to abide
The rule of Measure, notwithstanding we
Have [just] deputèd Measure him to guide?
By Measure everything is duly tried.
Think you not thus? my friend Felicity!

Felic. God forbid that it other wise should be!

Mag. Ye could not else, I wot, with me endure.

Felic. Endure? no! God [he] wot, it were great pain,
But-if [that] I were order'd by just Measure,
It were not possible me long to retain.

Here enters FANCY.

Fan. Tush! hold your peace! your language is [but] vain.
Please it your Grace to take [it] no disdain
To show you plainly the truth as I think!
Mag. Here is none, forsooth, whether you float or sink.
Felic. Whence come you, sir! that no man looked after?
Mag. Who made you bold to interrupt my tale?
Fan. Now benedicite! ye ween I were some hafter,
Or else some jangèling Jack of the Vale;
Ye ween I am drunken because I look pale.
Mag. Me seemeth ye have drunken more than bled.
Fan. 'Mong noble men I was brought up and bred.
Felic. Now leave this jangling, and to us expound
Why that ye said our language was in vain!
Fan. Marry! upon truth my reason I ground:
That without Largesse Nobleness can not reign.
And that I said once, yet I say again,—
I say without Largesse worship hath no place:
For Largesse is a purchaser of pardon and of grace.
Mag. Now, I beseech thee, tell me what is thy name!
Fan. Largesse, that all lords should love, sir! I hight.
Felic. But hight you, Largesse, increase of noble fame?
Fan. Yea, sir! undoubted.
Felic. Then, of very right,
With Magnificence, this noble prince of might,
Should be your dwelling, in my consideration.
Mag. Yet we will therein take good deliberation.
Fan. As in that I will not be against your pleasure.
Felic. Sir! hardily remember what may your name avance!
Mag. Largesse is laudable, so it be in Measure.
Fan. Largesse is he all princes doth advance:
I report me herein to King Louis of France.
Felic. Why have ye him named, and all other refused?

Fan. For since he died Largesse was little used.
Pluck up your mind, sir! what ail you to muse?
Have ye not Wealth here [always] at your will?
It is but a madding, these ways that ye use.
What availeth lordship, yourself for to kill
With care and with thought how Jack shall have Jill?
Mag. What? I have espied ye are a churl's page.
Fan. By God, sir! ye see few wise of mine age;
But courtesy hath blown you so full of wind
That *colica passio* hath griped you by the guts.
Felic. I' faith, brother Largesse! you have a merry mind.
Fan. I' faith, I set not by the world two Doncaster cuts.
Mag. Ye want but a wild flying bolt to shoot at the butts.
Though Largesse ye hight, your language is too large;
For which end goeth forward ye take little charge.
Felic. Let see this check if ye void can!
Fan. I' faith, else had I gone too long to school
But-if I could know a goose from a swan.
Mag. Well, wise men may eat the fish when ye shall draw the pull.
Fan. I' faith, I will not say that ye shall prove a fool.
But oft times have I seen wise men do mad deeds.
Mag. Go, shake thee, dog! eh! since ye will needs.
Ye are nothing meet with us for to dwell,
That with your lord and master so pertly can prate.
Get you hence, I say, by my counsel!
I will not use you to play with me checkmate.
Fan. Sir! if I have offended your noble estate,
I trow I have brought you such writing of record
That I shall have you again my good lord.
To you recommendeth Sad Circumspection,
And sendeth you this writing closed under seal.
Mag. This writing is welcome with hearty affection.
Why kept you it thus long? how doth he? well?
Fan. Sir! thanked be God! he hath his hele.

Mag. Wealth! get you home, and command me to Measure;
Bid him take good heed to you my singular treasure!
Felic. Is there anything else your Grace will command me?
Mag. Nothing but fare you well, till soon:
And make he take good keep to Liberty!
Felic. Your pleasure, sir! shortèly shall be done.
Mag. I shall come to you myself, I trow, this afternoon.
Here FELICITY *goes out.*
I pray you, Largesse! here to remain
Whilst I know what this letter doth contain.

JOHN HEYWOOD.

1505?—1570–80.

THE FOUR P'S.

The four P's are a PALMER, *a* PARDONER, *a* POTICARY, *and a* PEDLAR, *who meeting together compare and dispute about their several vocations.*

PALMER *speaketh.*

Now God be here! who keepeth this place?
Now, by my faith, I cry you mercy:
Of reason I must sue for grace,
My rudeness showeth me so homely.
Whereof your pardon ask'd and won,
I sue now, as courtesy doth me bind,
To tell this which shall be begun
In order as may come in mind.
I am a Palmer, as you see,
Which of my life much part have spent
In many a far and fair countrỳ,
As pilgrims do of good intent.
At Jerusalem have I been,
Before Christ's blessed Sepulture;
The Mount of Calvary I have seen,—
A holy place ye may be sure;
To Josaphat and Olivet,
On foot, God wot, I went right bare,—

Many a salt tear did I sweat
Before this carcase would come there;
Yet have I been at Rome also,
And gone the stations all a-row,—
Saint Peter's shrine, and many mo
Than if I told all ye do know,
Except that there be any such
That hath been there and diligently
Hath taken heed and marked much,—
Then can they speak as much as I.
Then at the Rhodes also I was;
And round about to Amias;
At Saint Toncomber and Saint Tronion;
At Saint Botolph and Saint Anne of Buxton;
On the hills of Armeny, where I saw Noah's Ark;
With holy Job, and Saint George in Southwark;
At Waltham and at Walsingham;
And at the good wood of Dagnam;
At Saint Cornelie's; at Saint James in Gales;
And at Saint Winifred's well in Wales;
At our Lady of Boston; at Saint Edmundsbury;
And straight to Saint Patrick's purgatory;
At Ridibone; and at the blood of Hailes,
Where pilgrims' pain right much avails;
At Saint Davies; and at Saint Denis;
At Saint Matthew, and Saint Mark in Venice;
At master John Shorne in Canterbury;
The great God of Kateward, at King Herry;
At Saint Saviour's; at our Lady of Southwell;
At Crome; at Wilsdome; and at Muswell;
At Saint Richard; and at Saint Roke;
And at our Lady that standeth in the oak:
To these, with other many one,
Devoutly have I pray'd and gone.

. . . . . .

Here enters a PARDONER.

Pard. And when you have gone as far as you can,
For all your labour and ghostly intent,
Ye will come home as wise as ye went.
Palm. Why, sir! despise ye pilgrimage?
Pard. Nay, fore God, sir! then did I rage.
I think ye right well occupied
To seek these Saints on every side;
Also your pains, I not dispraise it.
But yet I discommend your wit:
And ere we go even so shall ye,
If you in this will answer me.
I pray you show what the cause is
Ye went all these pilgrimages?
Palm. Forsooth, this life I did begin,
To rid the bondage of my sin,
For which these saints rehearsed, or this
I have both sought and seen, I wis:
Beseeching them to bear record
Of all my pain unto the Lord,
That giveth all remission
Upon each man's contrition,
And by their good mediation,
Upon my humble submission,
I trust to have in very deed
For my soul's health the better speed.
Pard. Now is your own confession likely
To make you a fool quickly,
For I perceive ye would obtain
No other thing for all your pain
But only grace your soul to save.
Now mark in this what wit ye have
To seek so far, and help so nigh!
Even here at home is remedy:
For at your door myself doth dwell,
Who could have saved your soul as well
As all your wide-wand'ring shall do

Though ye went thrice to Jericho.
Now, since ye might have sped at home,
What have ye won by running to Rome?

Palm. If this be true that you have moved,
Then is my wit indeed reproved.
But let us hear first what ye are!

Pard. Truly I am a Pardoner.

Palm. Truly a Pardoner, that may be true;
But a true Pardoner doth not ensue.
Right seldom is it seen, or never,
That truth and Pardoners dwell together.
For be your pardons never so great,
Yet them to enlarge ye will not let,
With such lies that ofttimes, Christ wot,
Ye seem to have that ye have not.
Wherefore I went myself to the self thing,
In every place, and, without feigning,
Had as much pardon there assuredly
As ye can promise me here doubtfully.

. . . . . .

Pard. By this first part of this last tale,
It seemeth ye came of late from the ale:
For reason on your side so far doth fail,
That ye leave reasoning and begin to rail.
Wherein you forget your own part clearly,
For you be as untrue as I.
And in one point ye are beyond me:
For you may lie by authority,
And all that have wander'd so far
That no man can be their controuler;
And where you esteem your labor so much,
I say yet again, my pardons are such
That if there were a thousand souls on a heap
I would bring them all to heaven as good cheap
As ye have brought yourself on pilgrimage
In the last quarter of your voyage,

Which is afar on this side heaven, by God:
There your labour and pardon is odd.
With small cost and without pain
These pardons bring them to heaven plain.
Give me but a penny or two pence,
And as soon as the soul departeth hence,
In half an hour, or three quarters at the most,
The soul is in heaven with the Holy Ghost.

Enter a POTICARY.

Pot. Send ye any souls to heaven by water?
Pard. If we do, sir! what is the matter?
Pot. By God, I have a dry soul should thither.
I pray you let our souls go to heaven together!
So busy you twain be in soul-health,
May not a Poticary come by stealth?
Yes! that we will, by Saint Anthony;
And, by the leave of this company,
Prove ye false knaves both, ere we go,
In part of your sayings: as this, lo!
(*To the Palmer*)
Thou by thy travel thinkest heaven to get;
(*To the Pardoner*)
And thou by pardons and relics countest no let
To send thine own soul to heaven sure,
And all other whom thou list to procure.
If I took an action, then were they blank:
For like thieves they rob away my thank.
All souls in heaven having relief,
Shall they thank your crafts? nay! mine, chief:
No soul, ye know, entereth heaven gate
Till from the body he be separate;
And whom have ye knowen die honestly
Without help of the Poticary?

. . . . . .

Since of our souls the multitude

I send to heaven, when all view'd,
Who should but I then altogether
Have thank of all their coming thither?

Pard. If ye kill'd a thousand in an hour's space,
When come they to heaven, dying out of grace?

Pot. But if a thousand pardons about your necks tied,
When come they to heaven if they never died?

Palm. Long life after good works indeed
Doth hinder man's receipt of meed;
And death before one duty done
May make us think we die too soon.
Yet better tarry a thing and have it,
Than go too soon and vainly crave it.

Pard. The longer ye dwell in communication
The less shall ye like this imagination:
For you may perceive at the first chop
Your tale is trapp'd in such a stop
That, at the least, ye seem worse than we.

Pot. By the mass, I hold us nought, all three.

Enter a PEDLAR.

Pedl. By our Lady, then I have gone wrong:
And yet to be here I thought it long.

Pot. Brother! ye have gone wrong no whit.
I praise your fortune and your wit
That can direct you so discreetly,
To plant you in this company:
Thou a Palmer, and there a Pardoner,
I a Poticary.

Pedl. And I a Pedlar.

Pot. Now, on my faith; full well watch'd:
Where the devil were we four hatch'd?

Pedl. That maketh no matter, since we be match'd.
I could be merry if that I had catch'd
Some money for part of the ware in my pack.——

NICHOLAS UDALL.

15 . . ?—1565.

RALPH ROISTER DOISTER.

RALPH ROISTER DOISTER, *a vain-glorious cowardly blockhead, fancies himself in love with, and pursues with his attentions, the* WIDOW CUSTANCE, *betrothed to* GAWIN GOODLUCK, *a thriving merchant.* MATTHEW MERRYGREEK, *a needy humourist living mainly upon* RALPH, *pretends to assist him in his chase.*

MATTHEW MERRYGREEK *enters, singing.*

Matt. As long liveth the merry man, they say,
As doth the sorry man, and longer by a day;
Yet the grasshopper, for all his summer piping,
Starveth in winter with hunger griping :
Therefore another said saw doth men advise
That they be together both merry and wise.
This lesson must I practise, or else ere long
With me Matthew Merrygreek it will be wrong.
Indeed men so call me : for, by Him that us bought,
Whatever chance betide I can take no thought.
Yet wisdom would that I did myself bethink
Where to be provided this day of meat and drink :
For know ye that, for all this merry note of mine,
He might pose me now that should ask me where I dine.
My living lieth here and there, of God's grace,
Sometime with this good man, sometime in that place.
Sometime Lewis Loiterer biddeth me come near;
Somewhiles Watkin Waster maketh us good cheer;
Sometime Davy Diceplayer, when he hath well cast,
Maketh revel-rout, as long as it will last;
Sometime Tom Titivile maketh us a feast;
Sometime with Sir Hugh Pie I am a bidden guest;
Sometime at Nichol Neverthrive's a get a sop;
Sometime I am feasted with Bryan Blinkensop;
Sometime I hang on Hankyn Hoddydoddy's sleeve;

But this day on Ralph Roister Doister's, by his leave.—
For truly of all men he is my chief banker,
Both for meat and money, and my chief sheet anchor.
Forsooth Roister Doister in that he doth say,
And require what ye will, ye shall have no Nay.
But now of Roister Doister somewhat to express,
That ye may esteem him after his worthiness,
In these twenty towns, and seek them throughout,
Is not the like stock whereon to graft a lout.
All the day long is he facing and cracking
Of his great acts in fighting and fray-making;
But when Roister Doister is put to his proof,
To keep the king's peace is more for his behoof.
If any woman smile or cast on him an eye,
Up is he hard to the ears in love by and by;
And in all the hot haste must she be his wife,
Else farewell his good days, and farewell his life!
Master Ralph Roister Doister is but dead and gone
Except she on him take some compassion.
Then chief of counsel must be Matthew Merrygreek!
What if I for marriage to such an one seek,
Then must I sooth it, whatever it is:
For what he saith or doth can not be amiss.
Hold by his Yea and Nay, be his own white son,
Praise and rouse him well, and ye have his heart won:
For so well liketh he his own fond fashions,
That he taketh pride of false commendations.
But such sport have I with him as I would not lese
Though I should be bound to live with bread and cheese:
For exalt him, and have him as ye best indeed,
Yea, to hold his finger in a hole for a need.
I can with a word make him fain or loath;
I can with as much make him pleased or wroth;
I can when I will make him merry and glad;
I can, when me list, make him sorry and sad;
I can set him in hope, and eke in despair;

I can make him speak rough, and make him speak fair.
But I marvel I see him not all this same day:
I will seek him out.—But lo! he cometh this way.
I have yond espied him sadly coming;
And in love, for twenty pound, by his glooming.

Enter RALPH ROISTER DOISTER.

Ralph. Come, death! when thou wilt! I am weary of my life.
Matt. (*aside*). I told you, I, we should woo another wife.
Ralph. Why did God make me such a goodly person?
Matt. (*aside*). He is in, by the week; we shall have sport anon.
Ralph. And where is my trusty friend Matthew Merrygreek?
Matt. (*aside*). I will make as I saw him not; he doth me seek.
Ralph. I have him espied, methinketh; yond is he;
Ho! Matthew Merrygreek my friend! a word with thee.
Matt. (*aside*). I will not hear him, but make as I had haste.
Farewell! all my good friends! the time away doth waste;
And the tide, they say, tarrieth for no man.
Ralph. Thou must with thy good counsel help me if thou can.
Matt. God keep thee, worshipful master Roister Doister!
And farewell the lusty master Roister Doister!
Ralph. I must needs speak with thee a word or twain.
Matt. Within a month or two I will be here again.
Negligence in great affairs, ye know, may mar all.
Ralph. Attend upon me now! and well reward thee I shall.
Matt. I have taken my leave, and the tide is well-spent.
Ralph. I die except thou help; I pray thee be content.
Do thy part well now, and ask what thou wilt!
For without thy aid my matter is all spilt.
Matt. Then to serve your turn I will some pains take,
And let all mine own affairs alone for your sake.
Ralph. My whole hope and trust resteth only on thee.
Matt. Then can ye not do amiss, whatever it be.
Ralph. Gramercies, Merrygreek! most bound to thee I am.
Matt. But up with that heart, and speak out like a ram!
You speak like a capon that had the cough now.
Be of good cheer! anon ye shall do well enow.

Ralph. Upon thy comfort I will all things well handle.
Matt. So, lo! that is a breast to blow out a candle.
But what is this great matter I would fain know;
We shall find remedy therefore, I trow.
Do ye lack money? ye know mine old offers;
Ye have always a key to my purse and coffers.
Ralph. I thank thee! had ever man such a friend?
Matt. Ye give unto me: I must needs to you lend.
Ralph. Nay! I have money plenty all things to discharge.
Matt. (*aside*). That knew I right well, when I made offer so large.
Ralph. But it is no such matter.
Matt. What is it then?
Are ye in danger, of debt to any man?
If ye be, take no thought, nor be not afraid!
Let them hardily take thought how they shall be paid!
Ralph. Tut! I owe nought.
Matt. What then! fear ye imprisonment?
Ralph. No!
Matt. No! I wist ye offend not to be so shent.
But if ye had, the Tower could not you so hold
But to break out at all times ye would be bold.
What is it? hath any man threaten'd you to beat?
Ralph. What is he that durst have put me in that heat?
He that beateth me, by His arms, shall well find
That I will not be far from him, nor run behind.
Matt. That thing know all men, ever since ye overthrew
The fellow of the lion which Hercules slew.
But what is it then?
Ralph. Of love I make my moan.
Matt. Ah, this foolish love! will't ne'er let us alone?
But because ye were refusèd the last day,
Ye said ye would ne'er more be entangled that way.
I would meddle no more since I find all so unkind.
Ralph. Yea! but I can not so put love out of my mind.
Matt. But is your love, tell me first! in any wise
In the way of marriage or of merchandize?

If it may otherwise than lawful be found,
Ye get none of my help, for an hundred pound.
Ralph. No! by my troth, I would have her to my wife.
Matt. Then are ye a good man, and God save your life!
And what, or who is she with whom ye are in love?
Ralph. A woman whom I know not by what means to move.
Matt. Who is it?
Ralph. A woman yond.
Matt. What is her name?
Ralph. Her yonder.
Matt. Whom?
Ralph. Mistress—ah!
Matt. Fie, fie for shame!
Love ye, and know not whom but her yond, a woman?
We shall then get you a wife, I can not tell when.
Ralph. The fair woman that supp'd with us yesternight.
And I heard her name twice or thrice, and had it right.
Matt. Yea! ye may see ye ne'er take me to good cheer with you.
If ye had, I could have told you her name now.
Ralph. I was to blame indeed; but the next time perchance.
And she dwelleth in this house.
Matt. What! Christian Custance?
Ralph. Except I have her to my wife I, I shall go mad.
Matt. Nay! unwise perhaps; but I warrant you for mad.
Ralph. I am utterly dead unless I have my desire.
Matt. Where be the bellows that blew this sudden fire?
Ralph. I hear she is worth a thousand pound or more.
Matt. Yea! but learn this one lesson of me afore:
A hundred pounds of marriage-money, doubtless,
Is ever thirty pounds sterling, or somewhat less;
So that her thousand pound, if she be thrifty,
Is much nearer about two hundred and fifty.
Howbeit, wooers and widows are never poor.
Ralph. Is she a widow? I love her better therefore.
Matt. But I hear she hath made promise to another.
Ralph. He shall go without her, an he were my brother.

Matt. I have heard say, I am right well advised,
That she hath to Gawin Goodluck been promised.
Ralph. What is that Gawin Goodluck?
Matt. A merchant man.
Ralph. Shall he speed before me? Nay, sir! by sweet Saint Anne.
Ah, sir! back there! quoth Mortimer to his sow.
I will have her mine own self, I make God a vow:
For I tell thee she is worth a thousand pound.
Matt. Yet a fitter wife for your mastership may be found.
Such a goodly man as you might get one with land,
Beside pounds of gold a thousand and a thousand,
And a thousand and a thousand and a thousand,
And so to the sum of twenty hundred thousand.
Your most goodly personage is worthy of no less.
Ralph. I am sorry God made me so comely, doubtless:
For that maketh me eachwhere so highly favour'd,
And all women of me so enamour'd.
Matt. Enamour'd, quoth you? have ye spied out that?
Ay, sir! marry! now I see ye know what's what.
Enamour'd! ha! marry, sir! say that again!
But I thought not ye had marked it so plain.
Ralph. Yes! eachwhere they gaze all upon me and stare.
Matt. Yea! malkin! I warrant you, as much as they dare.
And ye will not believe what they say in the street
When your mastership passeth by, all such as I meet,
That sometimes I can scarce find what answer to make.
Who is this? saith one,—Sir Launcelot du Lake?
Who is this? great Guy of Warwick? saith another;
No! say I,—it is the Thirteenth Hercules' Brother.
Who is this? noble Hector of Troy? saith the third;
No! but of the same nest, say I, it is a bird.
Who is this? great Goliah? Sampson? or Colbrand?
No! say I, but it is a brute of the alike land.
Who is this? great Alexander or Charlemagne?
No! it is the Tenth Worthy, say I to them again:—
I know not if I said well——

Ralph. Yes! for so I am.
Matt. Yea! for there were but nine Worthies before ye came.
To some others the third Cato I do you call;
And so as well as I can I answer them all.
Sir! I pray you what lord or great gentleman is this?
Master Ralph Roister Doister, dame! say I, I wis,
O Lord! saith she then, what a goodly man it is,—
Would Christ I had such a husband as he is!
O Lord! say some, that the sight of his face we lack!
It is enough for you, I say, to see his back;
His face is for ladies of high and noble parages,
With whom he hardly 'scapeth great marriages.
With much more than this, and much otherwise.
Ralph. I can thee thank, that thou canst such answers devise;
But I perceive thou dost me thoroughly know.
Matt. I mark your manners for mine own learning, I trow.
But such is your beauty, and such are your acts,
Such is your personage, and such are your facts,
That all women, fair and foul, more and less,
They eye you, they love you, they talk of you doubtless.
Your pleasant look maketh them all merry;
Ye pass not by, but they laugh till they be weary;
Yea! and money could I have, the truth to tell,
Of many, to bring you that way where they dwell.
Ralph. Merrygreek! for this thy reporting well of me——
Matt. What shall I else? sir! it is my duty, pardè.
Ralph. I promise thou shalt not lack while I have a groat.
Matt. 'Faith, sir! and I ne'er had more need of a new coat.
Ralph. Thou shalt have one to-morrow, and gold for to spend.
Matt. Then I trust to bring the day to a good end.
For as for mine own part, having money enow,
I could live only with the remembrance of you.
But now to your widow, whom you love so hot!
Ralph. By cock! thou sayest truth: I had almost forgot.
Matt. What if Christian Custance will not have you? what?

Ralph. Have me? Yes! I warrant you; never doubt of that!
I know she loveth me, but she dare not speak.
Matt. Indeed! meet it were somebody should it break.
Ralph. She looked on me twenty times yesternight,
And laughed so——
Matt. That she could not sit upright.
Ralph. No, 'faith, could she not.
Matt. No! even such a thing I cast.
Ralph. But for wooing, thou knowest, women are shamefast.
But, an she knew my mind, I know she would be glad,
And think it the best chance that ever she had.
Matt. To her then, like a man, and be bold forth to start!
Wooers never speed well that have a false heart.
Ralph. What may I best do?
Matt. Sir! remain ye awhile here!
Ere long one or other of her house will appear.
You know my mind.
Ralph. Yea, now hardily let me alone!
Matt. In the meantime, sir! if you please, I will go home.
And call your musicians: for in this your case
It would set you forth, and all your wooing grace.
Ye may not lack your instruments to play and sing.
Ralph. Thou knowest I can do that.
Matt. As well as anything.
Shall I go call your folk, that we may show a cast?
Ralph. Yea! run, I beseech thee, in all possible haste!
Matt. I go.
Ralph. Yea! for I love singing out of measure.
But who cometh forth yon, from my sweetheart Custance?
My matter frameth well; this is a lucky chance.

The obsequious MERRYGREEK *is too fond of fun to refrain from amusing himself at his friend's expense; and the empty braggart is made a fool of and foiled.*

JOHN LYLY.

1554—1601-6.

CAMPASPE.

CAMPASPE, *a prisoner to* ALEXANDER THE GREAT, *is beloved by him.* APELLES, *employed by the king to paint her portrait, falls in love with her, and she returns his love.*

Campaspe (*alone*). Campaspe! it is hard to judge whether thy choice be more unwise or thy chance unfortunate. Dost thou prefer—but stay! utter not that in words which maketh thine ears to glow with thoughts! Tush! better thy tongue wag than thy heart break. Hath a painter crept farther into thy mind than a prince? Apelles than Alexander? Fond wench! the baseness of thy mind bewrays the meanness of thy birth. But alas! affection is a fire, which kindleth as well in the bramble as in the oak, and catcheth hold where it first lighteth, not where it may best burn. Larks, that mount aloft in the air, build their nest below in the earth; and women, that cast their eyes upon kings, may place their hearts upon vassals. A needle will become thy fingers better than a lute, and a distaff is fitter for thy hand than a sceptre. Ants live safely till they have gotten wings; and juniper is not blown up till it hath gotten an high top. The mean estate is without care as long as it continueth without pride. But here cometh Apelles, in whom I would there were the like affection.

Enter APELLES.

Apel. Gentlewoman! the misfortune I had with your picture, will put you to some pains to sit again to be painted.

Cam. It is small pains for me to sit still, but infinite for you to draw still.

Apel. No, madam! to paint Venus was a pleasure; but to shadow the sweet face of Campaspe, it is a heaven.

Cam. If your tongue were made of the same flesh that your heart is, your words would be as your thoughts are; but such a common thing it is amongst you to commend, that oftentimes for fashion' sake you call them beautiful whom you know black.

Apel. What might men do to be believed?

Cam. Whet their tongues on their hearts.

Apel. So they do, and speak as they think.

Cam. I would they did.

Apel. I would they did not.

Cam. Why, would you have them dissemble?

Apel. Not in love, but their love. But will you give me leave to ask you a question without offence?

Cam. So that you will answer me another without excuse.

Apel. Whom do you love best in the world?

Cam. Him that made me last in the world.

Apel. That was a God.

Cam. I had thought it had been a man. But whom do you honour most? Apelles!

Apel. The thing that is likest you, Campaspe!

Cam. My picture?

Apel. I dare not venture upon your person. But come, let us go in! Alexander will think it long till we return.

The painting is finished.

Apel. I have now, Campaspe! almost made an end.

Cam. You told me, Apelles! you would never end.

Apel. Never end my love: for it shall be eternal.

Cam. That is neither to have beginning nor ending.

Apel. You are disposed to mistake. I hope you do not mistrust.

Cam. What will you say, if Alexander perceive your love?

Apel. I will say, it is no treason to love.

Cam. But how if he will not suffer thee to see my person?

Apel. Then I will gaze continually on thy picture.

Cam. That wilt not feed thy heart.

Apel. Yet shall it fill mine eye. Besides, the sweet thoughts, the sure hopes, thy protested faith, will cause me to embrace the shadow continually in mine arms of the which by strong imagination I will make a substance,

Cam. Well, I must be gone. But this assure yourself! that I had rather be in thy shop, grinding colours, than in Alexander's Court, following higher fortune.

CAMPASPE *alone.*

Foolish wench! what hast thou done? That, alas! which can not be undone, and therefore I fear me undone. But content is such a life, I care not for abundance. O, Apelles! thy love cometh from the heart, but Alexander's from the mouth.——

ALEXANDER, *suspecting the love of* APELLES *for* CAMPASPE, *will put it to the proof. He orders a Page to fetch* APELLES. "*Will him to come here, and when you see us earnestly in talk, suddenly cry out—* APELLES' *shop is on fire!*"

Hephestion. I marvel what your device shall be.

Alex. The event shall prove.

Heph. I pity the poor painter, if he be in love.——

Enter APELLES.

Alex. Apelles! what piece of work have you now in hand?

Apel. None in hand, if it like your Majesty; but I am devising a platform in my head.

Alex. I think your hand put it into your head. Is it nothing about Venus?

(*He had painted* CAMPASPE *as Venus.*)

Apel. No! something above Venus.

Page (*entering*). Apelles! Apelles! look about you! your shop is on fire.

Apel. Ay me! if the picture of Campaspe be burn'd, I am undone.

Alex. Stay, Apelles! no haste! it is your heart is on fire, not your shop; and if Campaspe hang there, I would she were

burnt. But have you the picture of Campaspe? Belike you love her well, that you care not though all be lost, so she be safe.

Apel. Not love her: but your Majesty knows that painters in their last works are said to excel themselves; and in this I have so much pleased myself, that the shadow as much delighteth me being an artificer, as the substance doth others that are amorous.

Alex. You lay your colours grossly. Though I could not paint in your shop, I can spy into your excuse. Be not ashamed, Apelles! it is a gentleman's sport to be in love. Call hither Campaspe! Methinks I might have been made privy to your affection: though my counsel had not been necessary, yet my countenance might have been thought requisite. But Apelles, forsooth, loved underhand, yea! and under Alexander's nose, and——but I say no more.

Apel. Apelles loveth not so, but he liveth to do as Alexander will.

Enter CAMPASPE.

Alex. Campaspe! here is news. Apelles is in love with you.

Cam. It pleaseth your Majesty to say so.

Alex. Hephestion! I will try her too.—Campaspe! for the good qualities I know in Apelles, and the virtue I see in you, I am determined you shall enjoy one another. How say you? Campaspe! would you say Ay?

Cam. Your handmaid must obey, if you command.

Alex. Think you not, Hephestion! that she would fain be commanded?

Heph. I am no thought-catcher; but I guess unhappily.

Alex. I will not enforce marriage, where I can not compel love.

Cam. But your Majesty may move a question where you be willing to have a match.

Alex. Believe me, Hephestion! these parties are agreed. They would have me both priest and witness. Apelles! take

Campaspe! Why move ye not? Campaspe! take Apelles! Will it not be? If you be ashamed one of the other, by my consent you shall never come together. But dissemble not, Campaspe! do you love Apelles?

Cam. Pardon, my lord! I love Apelles.

Alex. Apelles! it were a shame for you, being loved so openly of so fair a virgin, to say the contrary. Do you love Campaspe?

Apel. Only Campaspe.

Alex. Two loving worms, Hephestion! I perceive Alexander can not subdue the affections of men, though he conquer their countries. Love falleth like a dew, as well upon the low grass as upon the high cedar. Sparks have their heat, ants their gall, flies their spleen. Well! enjoy one another! I give her thee frankly, Apelles! Thou shalt see that Alexander maketh but a toy of love, and leadeth affection in fetters; using fancy as a fool to make him sport, or a minstrel to make him merry. It is not the amorous glance of an eye can settle an idle thought in his heart. No! no! it is children's game, a life for sempstresses and scholars: the one pricking in clouts, having nothing else to think on; the other, picking fancies out of books, have little else to marvel at. Go, Apelles! take with you your Campaspe! Alexander is cloy'd with looking on that which thou wonderest at.

Apel. Thanks to your Majesty, on bended knee! you have honour'd Apelles.

Cam. Thanks with bow'd heart! you have bless'd Campaspe.

Alex. Page! go warn Clytus and Parmenio and the other lords to be in readiness! Let the trumpet sound! strike up the drum! and I will presently into Persia. How now, Hephestion! is Alexander able to resist love as he list?

Heph. The conquering of Thebes was not so honourable as the subduing of these thoughts.

Alex. It were a shame Alexander should desire to command the world if he could not command himself. But come,

let us go! I will try whether I can not better bear my heart with my hand than I could with mine eye. And, good Hephestion! when all the world is won, and every country is thine and mine, either find me out another to subdue, or on my word I will fall in love.

THOMAS KYD.

15. . —1594.

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY.

HORATIO, *the son of* HIERONIMO, *while sitting with his mistress* BELIMPERIA *at night, in his father's garden, is murdered by a rival, and his body hung upon a tree.* BELIMPERIA'S *cries awakening* HIERONIMO, *he comes out, and by the torch-light finds the murdered man. His grief drives him mad.*

JAQUÈS *and* PEDRO, *two Servants, are in the Garden.*

Jaq. I wonder, Pedro, why our master thus
At midnight sends us with our torches light,
When man and bird and beast are all at rest,
Save those that watch for rape and bloody murder.
Ped. O Jaquès, know thou that our master's mind
Is much distract since his Horatio died:
And, now his aged years should sleep in rest,
His heart in quiet, like a desperate man
Grows lunatic and childish for his son:
Sometimes as he doth at his table sit,
He speaks as if Horatio stood by him.
Then starting in a rage, falls on the earth,
Cries out Horatio! where is my Horatio?
So that with extreme grief, and cutting sorrow,
There is not left in him one inch of man:
See, here he comes!

Enter HIERONIMO.

Hier. I pry through every crevice of each wall,
Look at each tree, and search through every brake,
Beat on the bushes, stamp our grandam earth,
Dive in the water, and stare up to heaven:
Yet can not I behold my son Horatio.
How now, who's there? sprites, sprites?
Ped. We are your servants that attend you, sir!
Hier. What make you with your torches in the dark?
Ped. You bid us light them, and attend you here.
Hier. No, no, you are deceived, not I, you are deceived:
Was I so mad to bid you light your torches now?
Light me your torches at the mid of noon,
When as the sun-god rides in all his glory;
Light me your torches then!
Ped. Then we burn daylight.
Hier. Let it be burnt! night is a murderous slut,
That would not have her treasons to be seen:
And yonder pale-faced Hecate there, the moon,
Doth give consent to that is done in darkness.
And all those stars that gaze upon her face,
Are aglets on her sleeve, pins on her train:
And those that should be powerful and divine,
Do sleep in darkness when they most should shine.
Ped. Provoke them not, fair sir! with tempting words;
The heavens are gracious; and your miseries
And sorrow make you speak you know not what.
Hier. Villain! thou liest, and thou doest naught
But tell me I am mad: thou liest, I am not mad:
I know thee to be Pedro and he Jaquès.
I'll prove it to thee; and were I mad, how could I?
Where was she the same night, when my Horatio was murder'd?
She should have shone: search thou the book!
Had the moon shone in my boy's face, there was a kind of grace,

That I know, nay I do know, had the murderer seen him,
His weapon would have fallen, and cut the earth,
Had be been framed of naught but blood and death;
Alack, when mischief doth it knows not what,
What shall we say to mischief?

ISABELLA (*his wife*) *enters.*

Isa. Dear Hieronimo! come in a-doors;
O seek not means to increase thy sorrow.
Hier. Indeed, Isabella! we do nothing here;
I do not cry—ask Pedro and Jaquès:
Not I indeed; we are very merry, very merry.
Isa. How? be merry here, be merry here?
Is not this the place, and this the very tree,
Where my Horatio died, where he was murder'd?
Hier. Was, do not say what! let her weep it out.
This was the tree, I set it of a kernel;
And when our hot Spain could not let it grow,
But that the infant and the human sap
Began to wither, duly twice a morning
Would I be sprinkling it with fountain water:
At last it grew and grew, and bore and bore:
Till at length it grew a gallows, and did bear our son.
It bore thy fruit and mine. O wicked, wicked plant!
See who knocks there!

(*One knocks within at the door.*)

Ped. It is a painter, sir.
Hier. Bid him come in, and paint some comfort,
For surely there's none lives but painted comfort!
Let him come in! one knows not what may chance.
God's will that I should set this tree! but even so
Masters ungrateful servants rear from naught,
And then they hate them that did bring them up.

The PAINTER *enters.*

Pain. God bless you, sir!

Hier. Wherefore? why? thou scornful villain!
How, where, or by what means should I be blest?
Isa. What wouldst thou have? good fellow!
Pain. Justice, madam!
Hier. O ambitious beggar! wouldst thou have that
That lives not in the world?
Why, all the undelved mines can not buy
An ounce of justice, 'tis a jewel so inestimable.
I tell thee, God hath engross'd all justice in his hands,
And there is none but what comes from him.
Pain. O then I see that God must right me for my murder'd son.
Hier. How, was thy son murder'd?
Pain. Ay, sir! no man did hold a son so dear.
Hier. What! not as thine? that's a lie,
As massy as the earth: I had a son,
Whose least unvalued hair did weigh
A thousand of thy sons, and he was murder'd.
Pain. Alas, sir! I had no more but he.
Hier. Nor I, nor I; but this same one of mine
Was worth a legion. But all is one.
Pedro! Jaquès! go in a-doors; Isabella! go,
And this good fellow here, and I,
Will range this hideous orchard up and down,
Like two she-lions reavèd of their young.
Go in a-doors, I say.

The PAINTER *and he sit down.*

Come let's talk wisely now!
Was thy son murder'd?
Pain. Ay, sir!
Hier. So was mine.
How dost thou take it? art thou not sometime mad?
Is there no tricks that come before thine eyes?
Pain. O lord, yes, sir!
Hier. Art á painter? canst paint me a tear, a wound?
A groan or a sigh? canst paint me such a tree as this?

Pain. Sir, I am sure you have heard of my painting :
My name's Bazardo.

Hier. Bazardo ! 'fore God an excellent fellow. Look you, sir ! Do you see ? I'd have you paint me in my gallery, in your oil colours matted, and draw me five years younger than I am : do you see ? sir ! let five years go, let them go,—my wife Isabella standing by me, with a speaking look to my son Horatio, which should intend to this, or some such like purpose : *God bless thee, my sweet son;* and my hand leaning upon his head thus, sir ! do you see ? may it be done ?

Pain. Very well, sir !

Hier. Nay, I pray mark me, sir !
Then, sir ! would I have you paint me this tree, this very tree :
Canst paint a doleful cry ?

Pain. Seemingly, sir !

Hier. Nay, it should cry ; but all is one.
Well, sir ! paint me a youth run through and through with villains' swords hanging upon this tree.
Canst thou draw a murderer ?

Pain. I'll warrant you, sir ! I have the pattern of the most notorious villains that ever lived in all Spain.

Hier. O, let them be worse, worse ! stretch thine art,
And let their beards be of Judas's own colour,
And let their eyebrows jut over : in any case observe that ;
Then, sir ! after some violent noise,
Bring me forth in my shirt and my gown under my arm, with my torch in my hand, and my sword rear'd up thus,—
And with these words ; *What noise is this ? who calls Hieronimo ?*
May it be done ?

Pain. Yea, sir !

Hier. Well, sir ! then bring me forth, bring me through alley

and alley, still with a distracted countenance going along, and let my hair heave up my night-cap. Let the clouds scowl, make the moon dark, the stars extinct, the winds blowing, the bells tolling, the owls shrieking, the toads croaking, the minutes jarring, and the clock striking twelve. And then at last, sir! starting, behold a man hanging, and tottering, and tottering, as you know the wind will wave a man, and I with a trice to cut him down. And looking upon him by the advantage of my torch, find it to be my son Horatio. There you may show a passion, there you may show a passion. Draw me like old Priam of Troy, crying, The house is a-fire, the house is a-fire; and the torch over my head; make me curse, make me rave, make me cry, make me mad, make me well again, make me curse hell, invocate, and in the end leave me in a trance, and so forth.

Pain. And is this the end?

Hier. O no, there is no end: the end is death and madness;
And I am never better than when I am mad;
Then methinks I am a brave fellow;
Then I do wonders; but reason abuseth me;
And there's the torment, there's the hell.
At last, sir! bring me to one of the murderers;
Were he as strong as Hector,
Thus would I tear and drag him up and down.

He beats the PAINTER *in.*

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

1564—1593.

DOCTOR FAUSTUS.

——born of parents base of stock,
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:
At riper years to Wittenberg he went,
Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.

So much he profits in divinity,
That shortly he was graced with Doctor's name,
Excelling all, and sweetly can dispute
In the heavenly matters of theology;
Till, swollen with cunning and a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
And melting heavens conspired his overthrow:
For, falling to a devilish exercise,
And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,
He surfeits on the cursed Necromancy.
Nothing so sweet as Magic is to him,
Which he prefers before his choicest bliss.

So FAUSTUS *sells his soul to the Devil, and when his time has come, the Devil claims him. It is the night of his death.*

Three SCHOLARS, *his friends, visit him.*

First Sch. Now, worthy Faustus! methinks your looks are changed.

Faust. O, gentlemen!

Sec. Sch. What ails Faustus?

Faust. Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow! had I lived with thee, then had I lived still, but now must die eternally. Look, sirs! comes he not? comes he not?

First Sch. O my dear Faustus! what imports this fear?

Sec. Sch. Is all our pleasure turn'd to melancholy?

Third Sch. He is not well with being over-solitary.

Sec. Sch. If it be so, we will have physicians, and Faustus shall be cured.

Third Sch. 'Tis but a surfeit, sir! fear nothing!

Faust. A surfeit of a deadly sin that hath damn'd both body and soul.

Sec. Sch. Yet, Faustus! look up to heaven, and remember, mercy is infinite.

Faust. But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned. The serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. O, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at

my speeches. Though my heart pant and quiver to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, O would I had ne'er seen Wittenberg, never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea! all the world: for which, Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea! heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy, and must remain in hell forever. Hell, O hell, for ever. Sweet friends! what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?

Sec. Sch. Yet, Faustus! call on God.

Faust. On God whom Faustus hath abjured? on God whom Faustus hath blasphemed? O my God! I would weep, but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood instead of tears, yea! life and soul. O, he stays my tongue: I would lift up my hands, but see! they hold 'em, they hold 'em.

Scholars. Who? Faustus!

Faust. Why, Lucifer and Mephistophilis. O, gentlemen! I gave them my soul for my cunning.

Scholars. O, God forbid!

Faust. God forbade it indeed, but Faustus hath done it: for the vain pleasure of four and twenty years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood; the date is expired: this is the time, and he will fetch me.

First Sch. Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

Faust. Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces if I named God; to fetch me body and soul if I once gave ear to divinity: and now it is too late. Gentlemen! away, lest you perish with me.

Sec. Sch. O what may we do to save Faustus?

Faust. Talk not of me, but save yourselves and depart.

Third Sch. God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

First Sch. Tempt not God, sweet friend! but let us into the next room and pray for him.

Faust. Ay, pray for me! pray for me! and what noise soever you hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

Sec. Sch. Pray thou! and we will pray, that God may have mercy upon thee.

Faust. Gentlemen! farewell; if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

Scholars. Faustus! farewell.

. . . . . .

FAUSTUS *alone. The clock strikes eleven.*

Faust. O Faustus!
Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually.
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease and midnight never come;
Fair nature's Eye! rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day; or let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul!
O lente lente currite, noctis equi!
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
O, I'll leap up to heaven: who pulls me down?
See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament:
One drop of blood will save me: O, my Christ!
Rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
Yet will I call on him: O spare me, Lucifer!
Where is it now? 'tis gone;
And see, a threatening arm, an angry brow!
Mountains and hills! come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of heaven.
No? then will I headlong run into the earth:
Gape, earth! O no! it will not harbour me.
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell!

Now draw up Faustus like a foggy mist
Into the entrails of yon labouring clouds,
That when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths;
But let my soul mount and ascend to heaven!

The clock strikes the half-hour.

O, half the hour is past: 'twill all be past anon.
O, if my soul must suffer for my sin,
Impose some end to my incessant pain!
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
A hundred thousand, and at last be saved!
No end is limited to damned souls.
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
O Pythagoras' metempsychosis! were that true,
This soul should fly from me, and I be changed
Into some brutish beast.
All beasts are happy, for when they die,
Their souls are soon dissolved in elements:
But mine must live still to be plagued in hell.
Curst be the parents that engender'd me:
No, Faustus! curse thyself, curse Lucifer,
That hath deprived thee of the joys of heaven.

The clock strikes twelve.

It strikes, it strikes; now, body! turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell.
O soul! be changed into small water drops,
And fall into the ocean; ne'er be found.

Thunder, and enter Devils.

O mercy, Heaven! look not so fierce on me.
Adders and serpents! let me breathe awhile:
Ugly hell! gape not; come not, Lucifer!
I'll burn my books: O Mephistophilis!

The Devils take off FAUSTUS.

First Sch. Come, gentlemen! let us go visit Faustus,
For such a dreadful night was never seen.
Since first the world's creation did begin,
Such fearful shrieks and cries were never heard.
Pray heaven the Doctor have escaped the danger!
Sec. Sch. O help us heaven! see here are Faustus' limbs
All torn asunder by the hand of death.
Third Sch. The devils whom Faustus served have torn him thus:
For twixt the hours of twelve and one, methought,
I heard him shriek and call aloud for help;
At which self time the house seem'd all on fire
With dreadful horror of these damned fiends.

EDWARD THE SECOND.

EDWARD, *imprisoned in Berkeley Castle, is left alone by his keepers,* GURNEY *and* MATREVIS, *who send in to him* LIGHTBORN, *a murderer.*

Edw. Who's there? what light is that? wherefore comest thou?
Light. To comfort you, and bring you joyful news.
Edw. Small comfort finds poor Edward in thy looks.
Villain! I know thou comest to murder me.
Light. To murder you, my most gracious lord?
Far is it from my heart to do you harm.
The queen sent me to see how you were used,
For she relents at this your misery:
And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears,
To see a king in this most piteous state?
Edw. Weep'st thou already? list awhile to me,
And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,
Or as Matrevis', hewn from the Caucasus,
Yet will it melt, ere I have done my tale.
This dungeon where they keep me is the sink
Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.
Light. O villains!

Edw. And there, in mire and puddle have I stood
This ten days' space ; and lest that I should sleep,
One plays continually upon a drum.
They give me bread and water, being a king ;
So that, for want of sleep and sustenance,
My mind's distemper'd, and my body's numb'd,
And whether I have limbs or no, I know not.
O, would my blood dropp'd out from every vein,
As doth this water from my tatter'd robes !
Tell Isabel the queen, I look'd not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,
And there unhorsed the duke of Cleremont.
Light. O, speak no more, my lord ! this breaks my heart.
Lie on this bed, and rest yourself awhile.
Edw. These looks of thine can harbour naught but death :
I see my tragedy written in thy brows.
Yet stay awhile, forbear thy bloody hand,
And let me see the stroke before it comes,
That even then when I shall lose my life,
My mind may be more steadfast on my God.
Light. What means your highness to mistrust me thus ?
Edw. What mean'st thou to dissemble with me thus ?
Light. These hands were never stain'd with innocent blood,
Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's.
Edw. Forgive my thought, for having such a thought !
One jewel have I left, receive thou this !
Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,
But every joint shakes as I give it thee.
O, if thou harbour'st murder in thy heart,
Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul !
Know that I am a king : O, at that name
I feel a hell of grief. Where is my crown ?
Gone, gone, and do I still remain alive ?
Light. You're overwatch'd, my lord ! lie down and rest.
Edw. But that grief keeps me waking, I should sleep ;
For not these ten days have these eyelids closed.

Now as I speak they fall, and yet with fear
Open again. O, wherefore sitt'st thou here?
Light. If you mistrust me, I'll be gone, my lord!
Edw. No, no, for if thou mean'st to murder me,
Thou wilt return again; and therefore stay!
Light. He sleeps.
Edw. O, let me not die yet! O, stay awhile!
Light. How now? my lord!
Edw. Something still buzzeth in mine ears,
And tells me if I sleep I never wake;
This fear is that which makes me tremble thus.
And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou come?
Light. To rid thee of thy life: Matrevis! come!
Edw. I am too weak and feeble to resist:
Assist me, sweet God! and receive my soul.

ROBERT GREENE.

1560?—1592.

FRIAR BACON AND FRIAR BUNGAY.

In the following scene we are concerned only with FRIAR BACON, *who by magic means had framed a Brazen Head, which should advise him how to encircle England with a wall of brass, against all coming foes. Worn out with long watching he lies on his bed, and orders his man* MILES *to watch for him, and to waken him the moment the Head begins to speak.*

Bacon. Miles! where are you?
Miles. Here, sir!
Bacon. How chance you tarry so long?
Miles. Think you that the watching of the *Brazen Head* craves no furniture? I warrant you, sir! I have so armed myself that if all your devils come I will not fear them an inch.
Bacon. Miles!
Thou knowest that I have divèd into Hell
And sought the darkest palaces of fiends;
That with my magic spells great Belcephon

Hath left his lodge and kneeled at my cell;
The rafters of the earth rent from the poles,
And three-form'd Luna hid her silver locks,
Trembling upon her concave continent
When Bacon read upon his magic book.
With seven years' tossing necromantic charms,
Poring upon dark Hecat's principles,
I have framed out a monstrous Head of Brass,
That, by the enchanting forces of the Devil,
Shall tell out strange and uncouth aphorisms,
And gird fair England with a wall of brass.
Bungay and I have watch'd these threescore days,
And now our vital spirits crave some rest.
If Argus lived and had his hundred eyes,
They could not overwatch Phobetor's night.
Now, Miles! in thee rests Friar Bacon's weal;
The honour and renown of all his life
Hangs in the watching of this Brazen Head.
Therefore I charge thee, by the immortal God
That holds the souls of men within his fist,
This night thou watch!—for ere the morning star
Sends out his glorious glister on the North,
The Head will speak! Then, Miles! upon thy life,
Wake me! for then by magic art I'll work
To end my seven years' task with excellence.
If that a wink but shut thy watchful eye,
Then farewell Bacon's glory and his fame!
Draw close the curtains, Miles! Now for thy life
Be watchful, and——

He falls asleep.

Miles. So! I thought you would talk yourself asleep anon; and 'tis no marvel, for Bungay on the days, and he on the nights, have watched just these ten and fifty days. Now this is *the* night, and 'tis my task, and no more. Now, Jesus bless me, what a goodly Head it is! And a nose!

You talk of *nos autem glorificare:* but here's a nose that may be called *nos autem populare* for the people of the parish. Well, I am furnished with weapons. Now, sir! I will set me down by a post, and make it as good as a watchman to wake me if I chance to slumber. I thought, goodman Head! I would call you out of your *memento.* Passion o' God! I have almost broke my pate.

A great noise.

Up, Miles! to your task; take your brown bill in your hand! here's some of your master's hobgoblins abroad.

The Brazen Head. Time is!

Miles. Time is! Why, master Brazen-Head! have you such a capital nose, and answer you with syllables? Time is! Is this all my master's cunning to spend seven years' study about? Time is! Well, sir! it may be we shall have some better orations of it anon. Well, I'll watch you as narrowly as ever you were watched, and I'll play with you as the nightingale with the slow-worm; I'll set a prick upon my breast. Now rest there, Miles! Lord have mercy upon me! I have almost killed myself.

A great noise.

Up, Miles! list how they rumble!

The Brazen Head. Time was!

Miles. Well, Friar Bacon! you have spent your seven years' study well, that can make your Head speak but two words at once. Time was! Yea, marry! time was when my master was a wise man; but that was before he began to make the Brazen Head. You shall lie while your back ache, an your Head speak no better. Well, I will watch and walk up and down, and be a peripatetian and a philosopher of Aristotle's stamp.

A great noise.

What! a fresh noise? Take thy pistols in hand, Miles!

The Brazen Head. Time is past!

A lightning flashes forth, and a hand appears that breaks down the Head with a hammer.

Miles. Master! master! up! Hell's broken loose; your Head speaks; and there's such a thunder and lightning that I warrant all Oxford is up in arms. Out of your bed, and take a brown bill in your hand! The Latter Day is come.

Bacon. Miles! I come.

Rises and comes forward.

O passing warily watch'd!
Bacon will make thee next himself in love.
When spake the Head?

Miles. When spake the Head? Did you not say that he should tell strange principles of philosophy? Why, sir! it speaks but two words at a time.

Bacon. Why, villain! hath it spoken oft?

Miles. Oft? Ay, marry! hath it, thrice; but in all those three times it hath utter'd but seven words.

Bacon. As how?

Miles. Marry! sir! the first time he said—Time is! as if Fabius Commentator should have pronounced a sentence; the second time he said—Time was! and the third time, with thunder and lightning as in great choler, he said—Time is past!

Bacon. 'Tis past, indeed. Ah, villain! time is past:
My life, my fame, my glory,—all are past.—
Bacon!
The turrets of thy hope are ruin'd down,—
Thy seven years' study lieth in the dust,—
Thy Brazen Head lies broken through a slave
That watch'd, and would not when the Head did will!
What said the Head first?

Miles. Even, sir!—Time is!

Bacon. Villain! if thou hadst call'd to Bacon then,—
If thou hadst watch'd, and waked the sleepy friar,
The Brazen Head had utter'd aphorisms,
And England had been circled round with brass.
But proud Asmenoth, ruler of the North,

And Demogorgon, master of the Fates,
Grudge that a mortal man should work so much.
Hell trembled at my deep-commanding spells ;
Fiends frown'd to see a man their overmatch.
Bacon might boast more than a man might boast :
But now the braves of Bacon have an end,—
Europe's conceit of Bacon hath an end,—
His seven years' practice sorteth to ill end ;
And, villain ! sith my glory hath an end,
I will appoint thee to some fatal end.
Villain ! avoid ! get thee from Bacon's sight !
Vagrant, go roam and range about the world,
And perish as a vagabond on earth !

Miles. Why then, sir ! you forbid me your service?

Bacon. My service, villain ! with a fatal curse,
That direful plagues and mischief fall on thee.

Miles. 'Tis no matter ! I am against you with the old proverb —The more the fox is cursed, the better he fares. God be with you, sir ! I'll take a book in my hand, a wide-sleeved gown on my back, and a crowned cap on my head, and see if I can want promotion.

HENRY PORTER.

THE TWO ANGRY WOMEN OF ABINGDON.

MRS. BARNES *and* MRS. GOURSEY, *their husbands present, sit down to a friendly game, with dice and tables. The beginning of a quarrel.*

Mr. B. Mistress Goursey ! how do you like this game ?

Mrs. G. Well, sir !

Mr. B. Can ye play at it ?

Mrs. G. A little, sir !

Mr. B. 'Faith, so can my wife.

Mr. G. Why then, Master Barnes ! and if you please,
Our wives shall try the quarrel 'twixt us two,
And we'll look on.

Mr. B. I am content. What, women! will you play?
Mrs. G. I care not greatly.
Mrs. B. Nor I, but that I think she'll play me false.
Mr. G. I'll see she shall not.
Mrs. B. Nay, sir! she will be sure you shall not see.
You of all men shall never mark her hand:
She hath such close conveyance in her play.
Mr. G. Is she so cunning grown? Come, come, let's see!
Mrs. G. Yea, Mistress Barnes! will ye not house your jests,
But let them roam abroad so carelessly?
(*Aside.* Faith, if your jealous tongue utter another,
I'll cross ye with one, an ye were my mother.)
Come! shall we play?
Mrs. B. Ay! what shall we play a game?
Mrs. G. A pound a game.
Mr. G. How? wife!
Mrs. G. 'Faith, husband! not a farthing less.
Mr. G. It is too much. A shilling were good game.
Mrs. G. No! we will even be ill housewives once.
You have been oft ill husbands. Let's alone.
Mr. B. Wife! will you play so much?
Mrs. B. I would be loath to be so frank a gamester
As Mistress Goursey is; and yet for once
I'll play a pound a game as well as she.
Mr. B. Go to! you'll have your will.—
Mrs. B. Come! there's my stake!
Mrs. G. And there's mine!
Mrs. B. Throw for the dice! Ill luck then! they are yours.—
Mr. B. Master Goursey! who says that gambling's bad
When such good angels walk 'twixt every cast?
Mr. G. This is not noble sport, but royal play.
Mr. B. It must be so where royals walk so fast.—
Mrs. B. Play right! I pray.
Mrs. G. Why so I do.
Mrs. B. Where stands your man?
Mrs. G. In his right place.

Mrs. B. Good faith, I think ye play me foul an ace.
Mr. B. No, wife! she plays ye true.
Mrs. B. Peace, husband! peace! I'll not be judged by you.
Mrs. G. Husband! Master Barnes! pray both ye walk.
We can not play if standers-by do talk.
Mr. G. Well to your game! we will not trouble ye.
The husbands stand aside.
Mrs. G. Where stands your man now?
Mrs. B. Doth he not stand right?
Mrs. G. It stands between the points.
Mrs. B. And that's my spite.
But yet methinks the dice run much uneven,
That I throw but deuce-ace and you eleven.
Mrs. G. And yet you see that I cast down the hill.
Mrs. B. Ay! I beshrew ye; 'tis not with my will.
Mrs. G. Do ye beshrew me?
Mrs. B. No! I beshrew the dice
That turn you up more at once than me at twice.
Mrs. G. Well, you shall see them turn for you anon.
Mrs. B. But I care not for them when your game's done.
Mrs. G. My game! what game?
Mrs. B. Your game, your game at tables.
Mrs. G. Well, Mistress! well! I have read Æsop's Fables,
And know your moral meaning well enough.
Mrs. B. Lo! you'll be angry now. Here's good stuff.—
Mr. G. How now? women! who hath won the game?
Mrs. G. Nobody yet.
Mr. B. Your wife's the fairest for it.
Mrs. B. Ay! in your eye.
Mrs. G. How do you mean?
Mrs. B. He holds you fairer for't than I.
Mrs. G. For what, forsooth?
Mrs. B. Good gamester! for your game.
Mr. B. Well, try it out! 'tis all but in the bearing.—
Mrs. B. Nay! if it come to bearing, she'll be best.
Mrs. G. Why, you're as good a bearer as the rest.

Mrs. B. Nay! that's not so; you bear one man too many.
Mrs. G. Better to do so than to bear not any.—
Mr. B. (*aside.*) Beshrew me, but my wife's jests grow too bitter.
Plainer speeches for her were the more fitter.
Old malice lies embowel'd in her tongue;
And new-hatch'd hate makes every jest a wrong.—
Mrs. G. Look ye, Mistress! now I hit ye.
Mrs. B. Why, ay! you never use to miss a blot.
Especially when it stands so fair to hit.
Mrs. G. How mean ye? Mistress Barnes!
Mrs. B. That Mistress Goursey's in the hitting vein.
Mrs. G. I hit your man.
Mrs. B. Ay! ay! my man, my man: but had I known,
I would have had my man stood nearer home.
Mrs. G. Why, had you kept your man in his right place
I should not then have hit him with an ace.
Mrs. B. Right, by the Lord! a plague upon the bones!
Mrs. G. And a hot mischief on the curser too!—
Mr. B. How now? wife!
Mr. G. Why, what's the matter? woman!
Mrs. G. It is no matter, I am——
Mrs. B. Ay! you are.
Mrs. G. What am I?
Mrs. B. Why, that's as you will be ever.
Mrs. G. That's every day as good as Barnes' wife.
Mrs. B. And better too: then what needs all this trouble?
A single horse is worse than that bears double.
Mr. B. Wife! go to! have regard to what you say!
Let not your words pass forth the verge of reason;
But keep within the bounds of modesty!
For ill-report doth like a bailiff stand
To pound the straying and the wit-lost tongue,
And make it forfeit into folly's hands.
Well, wife! you know it is no honest part
To entertain such guests with jests and wrongs.
What will the neighbouring country vulgar say,

Whenas they hear that you fell out at dinner?
Forsooth, they'll call it a pot-quarrel straight;
The best they'll name it is a woman's jangling.
Go to! be ruled! be ruled!

Mrs. B. God's lord! be ruled! be ruled!
What! think ye I have such a baby's wit,
To have a rod's correction for my tongue?
School infancy! I am of age to speak;
And I know when to speak. Shall I be chid
For such a——

Mrs. G. What a? Nay! Mistress! speak it out!
I scorn your stopt compares. Compare not me
To any but your equals, Mistress Barnes!

Mr. G. Peace! wife! be quiet!

Mr. B. O persuade! persuade!
Wife! Mistress Goursey! shall I win your thoughts
To composition of some kind effects?
Wife! if you love your credit, leave this strife,
And come shake hands with Mistress Goursey here!

Mrs. B. Shall I shake hands? Let her go shake her heels!
She gets nor hands nor friendship at my hands.
And so, sir! while I live I will take heed
What guests I bid again unto my house.

Mr. B. Impatient woman! will ye be so stiff
In this absurdness?

Mrs. B. I am impatient now I speak.
But, sir! I'll tell you more another time.
Go to! I will not take it as I have done.

She leaves the room.

Mrs. G. Nay! she might stay: I will not long be here
To trouble her.

And the quarrel so begun goes on, parting old friends and young lovers, culminating at last in a fight between the two angry women.

THOMAS DEKKER.

1570–5—1640?

THE SHOEMAKERS' HOLIDAY.

The argument of the play, as set down by the Author:—" SIR HUGH LACIE, *Earl of Lincoln, had a young gentleman of his own name, his near kinsman, that loved the* LORD MAYOR'S *daughter of London; to prevent and cross which love, the Earl caused his kinsman to be sent Colonel of a company into France: who resigned his place to another gentleman his friend, and came disguised like a Dutch Shoemaker, to the house of* SIMON EYRE *in Tower Street, who served the Mayor and his household with shoes." Our scene is* EYRE'S *shop, present his foreman* FIRKE, HODGE *and other journeymen;* EYRE, *and his* WIFE *just entering.*

Firke. Mum! here comes my Dame, and my Master! She'll scold, on my life, for loitering this Monday; but all's one. Let them all say what they can, Monday's our holiday.

Wife. You sing, Sir Sauce! but I beshrew your heart,
I fear for this your singing we shall smart.

Firke. Smart for me, Dame! why, Dame! why?

Hodge. Master! I hope you'll not suffer my Dame to take down your journeymen.

Firke. If she take me down, I'll take her up; yea! and take her down too, a button-hole lower.

Eyre. Peace, Firke! Not I, Hodge! by the life of Pharoah, by the Lord of Ludgate, by this beard, every hair whereof I value at a king's ransom, she shall not meddle with you. Peace, you bombast-cotton-candle quean! away, Queen of Clubs! quarrel not with me and my men, with me and my fine Firke.

Wife. Yea, yea, man! You may use me as you please. But let that pass!

Eyre. Let it pass! let it vanish away! Peace! Am I not Simon Eyre? Are not these my brave men, brave shoemakers, all gentlemen of the Gentle Craft? Prince I am none; yet am I nobly born, as being the sole son of a Shoemaker. Away, Rubbish! vanish, melt,—melt like kitchen-stuff!

Wife. Yea, yea! 'tis well: I must be call'd rubbish, kitchen-stuff, for a sort of knaves.

Firke. Nay, Dame! you shall not weep and wail in woe for me. Master! I'll stay no longer. Here's a vennentory of my shop-tools. Adieu, Master! Hodge! farewell!

Hodge. Nay! stay, Firke! thou shalt not go alone.

Wife. I pray let them go! There be more maids than Mawkin, more men than Hodge, and more fools than Firke.

Firke. Fools? Nails! if I tarry now, I would my guts were turn'd to shoe-thread.

Hodge. And if I stay, I pray God I may be turn'd to a Turk and set in Finsbury for boys to shoot at. Come, Firke!

Eyre. Stay, my fine knaves! you arms of my trade! you pillars of my profession! What! shall a Tittle-tattle's words make you forsake Simon Eyre? Avaunt, Kitchen-stuff! rip, you brown bread Pannikin! out of my sight. Move me not! Have I not ta'en you from selling tripes in East-cheap, and set you in my shop, and made you hail-fellow with Simon Eyre the Shoemaker, and now do you deal thus with my journeymen? Look, you powder-beef quean! on the face of Hodge! Here's a face for a lord.

Firke. And here's a face for any lady in Christendom.

Eyre. Rip, you Chitterling! avaunt!—Boy! bid the tapster of the Boar's Head fill me a dozen cans of beer for my journeymen!

Firke. A dozen cans? O brave! Hodge! now I'll stay.

Eyre. An the knave fills any more than two, he pays for them. A dozen cans of beer for my journeymen! Here, you mad Mesopotamians! wash your livers with this liquor! Where

be the odd ten? No more, Madge! no more! Well said, drink and to work! What work dost thou? Hodge! what work?

Hodge. I am a-making a pair of shoes for my Lord Mayor's daughter, Mistress Rose.

Firke. And I a pair of shoes for Sybil, my Lord's maid. I deal with her.

Eyre. Sybil? Fie! defile not thy fine workmanly fingers with the feet of kitchen-stuff and basting-ladles! Ladies of the Court, fine Ladies, my lads! commit their feet to our appareling; put gross work to Hans (*the "Dutchman"*)! Yarke and seam! yarke and seam!

Firke. For yarking and seaming let me alone an I come to't!

Hodge. Well, Master! all this is from the bias; do you remember the ship my fellow Hans told you of? The skipper and he are both drinking at the Swan. Here be the Portigues to give earnest; if you go through with it, you can not choose but be a Lord at least.

Firke. Nay, Dame! if my Master prove not a Lord and you a Lady, hang me!

Wife. Yea! like enough if you may loiter and tipple thus.

Firke. Tipple? Dame! no! we have been bargaining with Skellum Scanderbag (can you Dutch spreaken?) for a Ship of Silk Cypress laden with Sugar-candy.

Eyre. Peace, Firke! silence, Tittle-tattle! Hodge! I'll go through with it. Here's a seal-ring; and I have sent for a garded gown and a damask cassock. See where it comes! Look here, Maggy!

Enter the BOY, *with a velvet coat and an Alderman's gown;* EYRE *puts them on.*

Help me, Firke! apparel me, Hodge! Silk and satin, you mad Philistines! silk and satin.

Firke. Ha! Ha! my Master will be as proud as a dog in a doublet, all in beaten damask and velvet.

Eyre. Softly, Firke! for rearing of the nap and wearing thread-

bare my garments. How dost thou like me? Firke! how do I look? my fine Hodge!

Hodge. Why now you look like yourself, Master! I warrant you there's few in the City but will give you the wall, and come upon you with the Right Worshipful.

Firke. Nails! my Master looks like a threadbare cloak new-turn'd and dress'd. Lord! Lord! to see what good raiment doth. Dame! Dame! are you not enamour'd?

Eyre. How sayest thou? Maggy! am I not brisk? am I not fine?

Wife. Fine? By my troth, Sweetheart! very fine; by my troth I never liked thee so well in my life, Sweetheart! But let that pass! I warrant there be many women in the City have not such handsome husbands, but only for their apparel; but let that pass too!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

1564—1616.

MACBETH.

MACBETH, *inviting* BANQUO *to the royal banquet, at the same time gives order for his murder.*

A Room of State. Enter to the banquet MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENOX, *and other Lords.*

Mac. You know your own degrees; sit down! at first
And last the hearty welcome.
Lords. Thanks to your majesty!
Mac. Ourself will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state; but, in best time,
We will require her welcome.
Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir! to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter first MURDERER, *to the door.*

Mac. See! they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: Here I'll sit i' the midst:
Be large in mirth! anon, we'll drink a measure
The table round.—There's blood upon thy face!
Mur. 'Tis Banquo's then.
Mac. 'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he despatch'd?
Mur. My lord! his throat is cut; that I did for him.
Mac. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: Yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.
Mur. Most royal sir!
Fleance is 'scaped.
Mac. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect:
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock:
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.—But Banquo's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good lord! safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.
Mac. Thanks for that!
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present.—Get thee gone! to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again.

Exit MURDERER.

Lady M. My royal lord!
You do not give the cheer; the feast is sold
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome: To feed, were best at home;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.

Mac. Sweet remembrancer!
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
Len. May it please your highness sit?
Enter the GHOST *of* BANQUO *and sits in* MACBETH'S *place.*
Mac. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!
Ross. His absence, sir;
Lays blame upon his promise. Please it your Highness
To grace us with your royal company?
Mac. The table's full!
Len. Here is a place reserved, sir!
Mac. Where?
Len. Here, my good lord! What is't that moves your Highness?
Mac. Which of you have done this?
Lords. What? my good lord!
Mac. Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me!
Ross. Gentlemen! rise; his Highness is not well.
Lady M. Sit, worthy friends!—my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you keep seat;
The fit is momentary: upon a thought
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not.—Are you a man?
Mac. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.
Lady M. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger, which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
Impostors to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,

Authorised by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Mac. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you? —
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too!
If charnel-houses and our graves must send

GHOST *disappears.*

Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites.

Lady M. What! quite unmann'd in folly?

Mac. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fie, for shame!

Mac. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere human statute purged the gentle weal;
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end: but now, they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: This is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord!
Your noble friends do lack you.

Mac. I do forget:—
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends!
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all!
Then I'll sit down:—Give me some wine! fill full!

Enter GHOST.

I drink to the general joy of the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Mac. Avaunt! and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!

Lady M. Think of this, good peers!
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

Mac. What man dare, I dare;
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger,
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or, be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhibit, then protest me
The baby of a girl! Hence, horrible shadow!

GHOST *disappears.*

Unreal mockery! hence!—Why, so;—being gone,
I am a man again.—Pray you, sit still!

Lady M. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.

Mac. Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine are blanch'd with fear.

Ross. What sights? my lord!

Lady M. I pray you, speak not! he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him: at once, good night!
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once!

Len. Good night, and better health
Attend his majesty!

Lady M. A kind good night to all!

Exeunt Lords and Attendants.

Mac. It will have blood, they say! blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augurs, and understood relations, have
By magot-pies, and choughs, and rooks, brought forth
The secretest man of blood.

OTHELLO.

IAGO *plays upon* OTHELLO *to move him to jealousy of* DESDEMONA. CASSIO, OTHELLO'S *discharged lieutenant, has been praying* DESDEMONA *for her intercession in his behalf. As he is leaving her,* IAGO *and* OTHELLO *observe them.*

Iago. Ha! I like not that.
Oth. What dost thou say?
Iago. Nothing, my lord! or if—I know not what.
Oth. Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?
Iago. Cassio, my lord! No, sure, I can not think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.
Oth. I do believe 'twas he.
Des. How now? my lord!
I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.
Oth. Who is't you mean?
Des. Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord!
If I have any grace or power to move you,
His present reconciliation take;
For if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance, and not in cunning,
I have no judgment in an honest face:
I prithee call him back.
Oth. Went he hence now?
Des. Ay, sooth! so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me,
To suffer with him. Good love! call him back.
Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona! some other time
Des. But shall't be shortly?

Oth. The sooner, Sweet! for you.
Des. Shall't be to-night at supper?
Oth. No, not to-night.
Des. To-morrow dinner, then?
Oth. I shall not dine at home,
I meet the captains at the citadel.
Des. Why then, to-morrow night; or Tuesday morn;
Or Tuesday noon, or night; or Wednesday morn?
I prithee name the time; but let it not
Exceed three days: in faith, he's penitent;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason,—
Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best,—is not almost a fault
To incur a private check. When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello! I wonder in my soul
What you would ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering on. What! Michael Cassio,
That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part, to have so much to do
To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much,——
Oth. Prithee, no more! let him come when he will;
I will deny thee nothing.
Des. Why, this is not a boon;
'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person. Nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight,
And fearful to be granted.
Oth. I will deny thee nothing:
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
To leave me but a little to myself.
Des. Shall I deny you? no: farewell, my lord!
Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona! I'll come to thee straight.

Des. Emilia! come. Be as your fancies teach you;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

She goes out, with EMILIA.

Oth. Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.
Iago. My noble lord—
Oth. What dost thou say? Iago!
Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?
Oth. He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?
Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.
Oth. Why of thy thought? Iago!
Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.
Oth. O, yes! and went between us very oft.
Iago. Indeed?
Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed;—discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?
Iago. Honest? my lord!
Oth. Honest! ay, honest.
Iago, My lord! for aught I know.
Oth. What dost thou think?
Iago. Think? my lord!
Oth. Think, my lord! By Heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown!—Thou dost mean something:
I heard thee say but now, thou likedst not that,
When Cassio left my wife: what didst not like?
And, when I told thee he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou criedst, Indeed!
And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit. If thou dost love me,
Show me thy thought.

Iago. My lord! you know I love you.
Oth. I think thou dost;
And, for I know thou art full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou givest them breath,
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:
For such things in a false disloyal knave
Are tricks of custom; but in a man that's just,
They're close denotements, working from the heart
That passion can not rule.
Iago. For Michael Cassio,
I dare be sworn I think that he is honest.
Oth. I think so too.
Iago. Men should be what they seem;
Or those that be not, would they might seem none!
Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.
Iago. Why then, I think Cassio's an honest man.
Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this:
I prithee speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminate; and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.
Iago. Good my lord! pardon me:
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.—
Utter my thoughts? Why, say they are vile and false,—
As where's that palace whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not? Who has a breast so pure
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets and law-days, and in session sit
With meditations lawful?
Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago!
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and makest his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.
Iago. I do beseech you,—
Though I perchance am vicious in my guess
(As I confess it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses, and oft my jealousy

Shapes faults that are not)—I entreat you then,
From one that so imperfectly conjects,
You'd take no notice, nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance :—
It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean?

Iago. Good name in man and woman, dear my lord!
Is the immediate jewel of their souls :
Who steals my purse steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing;
'T was mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands ;
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. By Heaven, I'll know thy thought!

Iago. You can not, if my heart were in your hand;
Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

Oth. Ha!

Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy ;
It is the green-eyed monster, which doth make
The meat it feeds on! that cuckold lives in bliss,
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who doats, yet doubts : suspects, yet strongly loves!

Oth. O, misery!

Iago. Poor and content is rich, and rich enough ;
But riches fineless is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor :—
Good heaven the souls of all my tribe defend
From jealousy!

Oth. Why, why is this?
Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy;
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? No! to be once in doubt,
Is once to be resolved. Exchange me for a goat,

When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference! 'Tis not to make me jealous,
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well;
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago!
I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And, on the proof, there is no more but this,—
Away at once with love or jealousy!

Iago. I am glad of this; for now I shall have reason
To show the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me!—I speak not yet of proof.
Look to your wife! observe her well with Cassio!
Wear your eye thus,—not jealous, nor secure!
I would not have your free and noble nature,
Out of self-bounty, be abused; look to't!
I know our country disposition well;
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
Is not to leave undone, but keep unknown.

Oth. Dost thou say so?

Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you:
And when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,
She loved them most.

Oth. And so she did.

Iago. Why, go to then!
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To seal her father's eyes up, close as oak,—
He thought 'twas witchcraft:—but I am much to blame;
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,
For too much loving you.

Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.

Iago. I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.
Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.
Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.
I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love;—but I do see you are moved :—
I am to pray you not to strain my speech
To grosser issues nor to larger reach,
Than to suspicion.
Oth. I will not.
Iago. Should you do so, my lord!
My speech should fall into such vile success
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy friend :—
My lord! I see you are moved.
Oth. No, not much moved :—
I do not think but Desdemona's honest.
Iago. Long live she so! and long live you to think so!
Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself,——
Iago. Ay, there's the point :—as,—to be bold with you,—
Not to affect many proposèd matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends :—
Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural,—
But pardon me! I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her; though I may fear
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And happily repent.
Oth. Farewell, farewell!
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more!
Set on thy wife to observe!—Leave me, Iago.
Iago. My lord, I take my leave.

Seeming to go.

Oth. Why did I marry?—This honest creature doubtless
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago (*returning*). My lord, I would I might entreat your honour
To scan this thing no farther; leave it to time!
And though it be fit that Cassio have his place,—
For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,—
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
You shall by that perceive him and his means:
Note if your lady strain his entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity!
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears,—
As worthy cause I have to fear I am,—
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

KING LEAR.

LEAR, *king of Britain, believing the protestations of his two daughters,* GONERIL *and* REGAN, *divides his kingdom between them, abandoning his sovereignty, and disinheriting his youngest daughter* CORDELIA, *whose love was not expressed in words. The elder daughters cruelly abuse their power, and by their treatment of the old man drive him into madness.*

First GONERIL *would reduce his train of knights. She enters, while the privileged faithful* FOOL *is rating him for having given all away.*

Lear. How now? daughter! what makes that frontlet on?
Methinks you are too much of late in the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning. Now, thou art an O without a figure. I am better than thou art now: I am a fool; thou art nothing. (*To Goneril.*) Yes! forsooth, I will hold my tongue: so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum! mum!
He that keeps nor crust nor crumb,
Weary of all, shall want some.
(*Pointing to Lear.*) That's a shell'd peascod!

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licensed fool,
But other of your insolent retinue

Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endurèd riots. Sir!
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,—
Which else were shame,—that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you trow, nuncle!
The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young.
So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would you would make use of that good wisdom
Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
These dispositions, which of late transport you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse?—
Whoop! Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Does any here know me? This is not Lear:
Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, or his discernings
Are lethargied,—Ha! waking? 'tis not so,
Who is it that can tell me who I am?——

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that;
For by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason,
I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name? fair gentlewoman!

Gon. This admiration, sir! is much o' the favour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you

To understand my purposes aright,—
As you are old and reverend, should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd, and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel,
Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be then desired,
By her that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
Which know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses! call my train together!—
Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents! O, sir! are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir!—Prepare my horses!—
Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir! be patient.

Lear (*to* GONERIL). Detested kite! thou liest:
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name.—O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,

And added to the gall. O Lear! Lear! Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,
Striking his head.
And thy dear judgment out.—Go! go!—My people!

LEAR *betakes himself to* REGAN, *who is already informed by her sister and prepared to pursue the same harsh conduct. She and the* DUKE OF CORNWALL, *her husband, set* KENT, *his messenger, in the stocks; and at first refuse to see himself. After some discourteous waiting, they appear.*

Lear. Good-morrow to you both!
Corn. Hail to your Grace!
KENT *is set at liberty.*
Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.
Lear. Regan! I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so; if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress.—O, are you free? [*To* KENT.
Some other time for that.—Belovèd Regan!
Thy sister's naught: O Regan! she hath tied
Sharp-toothed unkindness, like a vulture, here—
(*Points to his heart.*)
I can scarce speak to thee: thou'lt not believe,
Of how depraved a quality—O Regan!
Reg. I pray you, sir! take patience; I have hope
You less know how to value her desert,
Than she to scant her duty.
Lear. Say, how is that?
Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir! perchance,
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
Lear. My curses on her!
Reg. O, sir! you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge

Of her confine : you should be ruled, and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return :
Say you have wrong'd her, sir!

Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house :—
" Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ;
Kneeling ;
Age is unnecessary : on my knees I beg,
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food."

Reg. Good sir! no more ; these are unsightly tricks :
Return you to my sister!

Lear (*rising*). Never, Regan!
She hath abated me of half my train ;
Look'd black upon me ; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent like, upon the very heart :—
All the stored vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. Fie, sir! fie!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun
To fall and blast her pride!

Reg. O the blest Gods! so will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan! thou shalt never have my curse ;
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness : her eyes are fierce, but thine
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in : thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,

Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir! to the purpose!

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks?

Trumpet without.

Corn. What trumpet's that?

Reg. I know't my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.—

Enter OSWALD.

Is your lady come?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows:—
Out, varlet! from my sight!

Corn. What means your Grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan! I have good hope
Thou didst not know of't.—Who comes here?

Enter GONERIL.

O, heavens!
If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!—
Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?—
O, Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by the hand? sir! How have I offended?
All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O, sides! you are too tough:
Will you yet hold?—How came my man i' the stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir! but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father! being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me;

I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.
ar. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl—
Necessity's sharp pinch!—Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot.—Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom!

Looking on OSWALD.

m. At your choice, sir!
ar. I prithee, daughter! do not make me mad.
I will not trouble thee, my child! farewell:
We'll no more meet, no more see one another:—
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter,
Or, rather, a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine; thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.
g. Not altogether so:
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir! to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion,
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.
ar. Is this well spoken?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir! what, fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How in one house
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.
Gon. Why might not you, my lord! receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?
Reg. Why not? my lord! If then they chanced to slack you,
We could controul them. If you will come to me
(For now I spy a danger), I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty; to no more
Will I give place or notice.
Lear. I gave you all—
Reg. And in good time you gave it.
Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What, must I come to you
With five-and-twenty? Regan! said you so?
Reg. And speak't again, my lord! no more with me.
Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,
When others are more wicked; not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise:—I'll go with thee;
To GONERIL.
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.
Gon. Hear me, my lord!
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow, in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?
Reg. What need one?
Lear. O, reason not the need! our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap, as beast's: thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,

Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.—But, for true need—
You heavens! give me that patiènce I need!
You see me here, you Gods! a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger!
O, let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks!—No, you unnatural hags!
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things—
What they are yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep:—
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or ere I'll weep.—O, fool! I shall go mad!

. . . . . .

lad indeed! CORDELIA, *now Queen of France, brings over an army to redress his wrongs.* KENT *has brought the old king into the French camp, where a physician is tending him.* LEAR *is asleep on a bed;* CORDELIA *watching for the hoped-for return of reason. He has not yet recognized her.*

'or. (*to the Physician*). How does the King?
'hys. Madam! sleeps still.
'or. O you kind Gods!
Cure this great breach in his abusèd nature!
The untuned and jarring senses O wind up
Of this child-changèd father!
'hys. So please your Majesty,
That we may wake the King? he hath slept long.
'or. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?
'ent. Ay, madam! in the heaviness of sleep
We put fresh garments on him.

Phys. Be by, good madam! when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.
Cor. Very well!
Phys. Please you, draw near.—Louder the music there!
Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!
Kent. Kind and dear princess!
Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face
To be opposed against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder,
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick cross-lightning? to watch (poor perdu!)
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire. And wast thou fain, poor father!
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack! alack!
'Tis wonder, that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all.—He wakes; speak to him!
Phys. Madam! do you; 'tis fittest.
Cor. How does my royal Lord? How fares your Majesty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:—
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.
Cor. Sir! do you know me?
Lear. You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?
Cor. Still, still, far wide!
Phys. He's scarce awake; let him alone awhile!
Lear. Where have I been? Where am I?—Fair daylight?—
I am mightily abused.—I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus.—I know not what to say.—
I will not swear these are my hands: let's see!

I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured
Of my condition!

Cor. O, look upon me, sir!
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:—
No, sir! you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me!
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, and, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me!
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, 'faith! I pray, weep not!
If you have poison for me I will drink it.
I know you do not love me: for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.

Cor No cause! no cause!

Lear. Am I in France?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir!

Lear. Do not abuse me!

Phys. Be comforted, good madam! the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.

Cor. Will't please your Highness walk?

Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive! I am old and foolish.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

The MONTAGUES *and* CAPULETS *are bitter foes.* ROMEO, *a* MONTAGUE, *has met at a masqued ball of the* CAPULETS *the daughter of the house, and loves her at first sight. He scales the garden wall to watch under her window.*

Romeo. He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

JULIET *appears at the window.*

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—
Arise, fair sun! and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but pale and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—
It is my lady; O, it is my love:
O, that she knew she were!—
She speaks, yet she says nothing; what of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do intreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

Jul. Ay me!

Rom. She speaks:—
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Jul. O Romeo! Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. (*aside.*) Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

Jul. 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;—
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title:—Romeo! doff thy name;
And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself!

Rom. I take thee at thy word:
Call me but Love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Jul. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

Rom. By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear Saint! is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Jul. My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound;
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair Maid! if either thee dislike.
Jul. How camest thou hither, tell me? and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb;
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.
Rom. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls,
For stony limits can not hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.
Jul. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.
Rom. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,
Than twenty of their swords; look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.
Jul. I would not for the world they saw thee here.
Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes,
And, but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death proroguèd, wanting of thy love.
Jul. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?
Rom. By Love, that first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot, yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.
Jul. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke; but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know, thou will say—Ay;
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou may'st prove false; at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O, gentle Romeo!
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee Nay,

So thou wilt woo ; but, else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague! I am too fond,
And therefore thou may'st think my 'haviour light :
But trust me, gentleman ! I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was 'ware,
My true love's passion : therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered!

Rom. Lady! by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,——

Jul. O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable!

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Jul. Do not swear at all!
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee!

Rom. If my heart's dear love——

Jul. Well, do not swear! Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night :
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say—It lightens. Sweet! good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night! good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

Rom. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it :
And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Would'st thou withdraw it? for what purpose? Love!

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have :
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep ; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

NURSE *calls within.*

I hear some noise within ; dear Love ! adieu !
Anon, good nurse !—Sweet Montague ! be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again.

Exit.

Rom. O blessed, blessed night ! I am afear'd,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, *above.*

Jul. Three words, dear Romeo ! and good night, indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite ;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world ;—
Nurse (*within*). Madam !
Jul. I come, anon :—but, if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee,——
Nurse (*within*). Madam !
Jul. By and by I come :—
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief :
To-morrow will I send.
Rom. So thrive my soul,——
Jul. A thousand times good night !

Exit.

Rom. A thousand times the worse, to want thy light,—
Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their books ;
But love from love, toward school, with heavy looks.

Retiring slowly.

Re-enter JULIET, *above.*

Jul. Hist! Romeo! hist!—O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tercel-gentle back again!
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
With repetition of my Romeo's name.

Rom. It is my soul that calls upon my name:
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears.

Jul. Romeo!

Rom. My Dear!

Jul. What o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

Rom. By the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail! 'tis twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it!

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

Rom. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

Jul. 'Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone:
And yet, no farther than a wanton's bird,
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Rom. I would I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet! so would I:
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night! good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say—Good night! till it be morrow.

Exit.

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!—
Would I were Sleep and Peace so sweet to rest!

THE TEMPEST.

MIRANDA, *in the enchanted island, has seen no man but her father* PROSPERO, *till* FERDINAND *is wrecked upon it.*

Enter FERDINAND, *bearing a log.*

Ferd. There be some sports are painful, but their labour
Delight in them sets off; some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone; and most poor matters
Point to rich ends. This my mean task would be
As heavy to me as 'tis odious, but
The Mistress which I serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labours pleasures: O, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed;
And he's composed of harshness. I must remove
Some thousands of these logs, and pile them up,
Upon a sore injunction. My sweet Mistress
Weeps when she sees me work; and says, such baseness
Had never like executor. I forget:
But these sweet thoughts do even refresh my labour;
Most busyless when I do it.

Enter MIRANDA, *and* PROSPERO *at a distance.*

Mira. Alas, now! pray you,
Work not so hard: I would the lightning had
Burnt up those logs you are enjoin'd to pile!
Pray, set it down, and rest you! when this burns,
'Twill weep for having wearied you. My father
Is hard at study; pray now, rest yourself!
He's safe for these three hours.

Ferd. O most dear Mistress!
The sun will set before I shall discharge
What I must strive to do.

Mira. If you'll sit down,
I'll bear your logs the while: pray, give me that!
I'll carry it to the pile.

Ferd. No, precious creature!
I had rather crack my sinews, break my back,
Than you should such dishonour undergo,
While I sit lazy by.
Mira. It would become me
As well as it does you: and I should do it
With much more ease; for my goodwill is to it
And yours it is against.
Pros. (*aside.*) Poor worm! thou art infected:
This visitation shows it.
Mira. You look wearily.
Ferd. No, noble Mistress! 'tis fresh morning with me,
When you are by at night. I do beseech you—
Chiefly that I might set it in my prayers—
What is your name?
Mira. Miranda:—O my father!
I have broke your hest to say so.
Ferd. Admired Miranda!
Indeed the top of admiration! worth
What's dearest to the world! Full many a lady
I have eyed with best regard; and many a time
The harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear: for several virtues
Have I liked several women; never any
With so full soul, but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
And put it to the foil: but you, O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best!
Mira. I do not know
One of my sex; no woman's face remember,
Save, from my glass, mine own; nor have I seen
More that I may call men, than you, good friend!
And my dear father: how features are abroad,
I am skill-less of; but by my modesty,
The jewel in my dower, I would not wish

Any companion in the world but you;
Nor can imagination form a shape,
Besides yourself, to like of. But I prattle
Something too wildly, and my father's precepts
I therein do forget.

Ferd. I am, in my condition,
A prince, Miranda! I do think, a king
(I would not so!)—and would no more endure
This wooden slavery than I would suffer
The flesh-fly blow my mouth.—Hear my soul speak!—
The very instant that I saw you, did
My heart fly to your service; there resides,
To make me slave to it; and for your sake
Am I this patient log-man.

Mira. Do you love me?

Ferd. O heaven! O earth! bear witness to this sound,
And crown what I profess with kind event,
If I speak true! if hollowly, invert
What best is boded me to mischief! I,
Beyond all limit of what else i' the world,
Do love, prize, honour you.

Mira. I am a fool
To weep at what I am glad of.

Pros. Fair encounter
Of two most rare affections! Heavens rain grace
On that which breeds between them.

Ferd. Wherefore weep you?

Mira. At mine unworthiness, that dare not offer
What I desire to give; and much less take
What I shall die to want: but this is trifling;
And all the more it seeks to hide itself
The bigger bulk it shows. Hence, bashful cunning!
And prompt me, plain and holy innocence!
I am your wife, if you will marry me;
If not, I'll die your maid: to be your fellow

You may deny me ; but I'll be your servant,
Whether you will or no.

Ferd. My Mistress, dearest!
And I thus humble ever!

Mira. My husband then!

Ferd. Ay, with a heart as willing
As bondage e'er of freedom : here's my hand.

Mira. And mine, with my heart in't : and now farewell,
Till half an hour hence!

Ferd. A thousand thousand!

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

TITANIA, *Queen of Fairies, is asleep in a retired wood, when certain Mechanics of Athens* (QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING) *meet there to rehearse a play to be performed before* DUKE THESEUS. TITANIA *and* KING OBERON *have had a quarrel, and* OBERON *puts a spell upon her, so that on awaking she shall doat upon the first object that meets her eyes. The rehearsal begins:—*

Bottom. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvelous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.

Bot. Peter Quince!

Quin. What say'st thou? bully Bottom!

Bot. There are things in this comedy of *Pyramus and Thisbe* that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies can not abide. How answer you that?

Snout. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

Star. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write me

a prologue: and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bot. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight!

Snout. Will not the ladies be afear'd of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters! you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to it.

Snout. Therefore, another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—*Ladies! or fair ladies! I would wish you, or I would request you, or I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: No! I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:* and there, indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner!

Quin. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber: for you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

Snug. Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

Bot. A calendar! a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine! find out moonshine!

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber-window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

Quin. Ay! or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say, he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snug. You can never bring in a wall.—What say you? Bottom!

Bot. Some man or other must present Wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast, about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts! Pyramus! you begin; when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.

Enter PUCK *behind.*

Puck. What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?
What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor;
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, Pyramus!—Thisbe! stand forth.

Pyr. *Thisbe! the flowers of odious savours sweet.*

Quin. Odours! odours!

Pyr. *——odours savours sweet:*
So doth thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear!
But hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,
And by and by I will to thee appear.

Exit.

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here!

Aside.—Exit.

This. Must I speak now?

Quin. Ay, marry! must you: for you must understand he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

This. *Most radiant Pyramus! most lily white of hue,*
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant briar,
Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus! at Ninny's tomb.

Quin. Ninus' tomb, man! Why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all.—Pyramus! enter; your cue is past; it is *never tire.*

Re-enter PUCK, *and* BOTTOM *with an ass's head.*

This. O,—*As true as truest horse that yet would never tire.*
Pyr. *If I were fair, Thisbe! I were only thine:—*

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted.
Pray, masters! fly, masters! help!

Exeunt Clowns.

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through briar;
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

Exit.

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them to make me afear'd.

Re-enter SNOUT.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?
Bot. What do you see? you see an ass' head of your own; do you?

Exit Snout.

Re-enter QUINCE.

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated.

Exit.

Bot. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.

He sings:

The oosel-cock, so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill;

Titania (*waking*). What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bot. *The finch, the sparrow, and the lark*
The plain-song cuckoo grey,
Whose notes full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer Nay—

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry *Cuckoo!* never so?

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal! sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress! you should have little reason for that. And yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days. The more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends! Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither! but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go!
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit, of no common rate;
The summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee: therefore, go with me!
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep:
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,

That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—
Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!

Enter PEAS-BLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, *and* MUSTARD-SEED, *Fairies.*

1 *Fai.* Ready.
2 *Fai.* And I.
3 *Fai.* And I.
4 *Fai.* And I.
All. Where shall we go?
Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman!
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks, and dewberries;
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And, for night-tapers, crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my Love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves! and do him courtesies!
1 *Fai.* Hail, mortal!
2 *Fai.* Hail!
3 *Fai.* Hail!
4 *Fai.* Hail!
Bot. I cry your worships mercy, heartily.—I beseech your worship's name.
Cob. Cobweb.
Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb! If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name? honest gentleman!
Peas. Peas-blossom.
Bot. I pray you, commend me to mistress Squash, your mother, and to master Peas-cod, your father! Good master Peas-blossom! I shall desire you of more acquaintance too.—Your name? I beseech you, sir!
Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good master Mustard-seed! I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master Mustard-seed!

Tita. Come, wait upon him! lead him to my bower!
The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforcèd chastity.
Tie up my Love's tongue, bring him silently!

BEN JONSON.

1573-4—1637.

VOLPONE.

VOLPONE, *a wealthy but avaricious Venetian, pretends to be dying in order to draw gifts from his expectant heirs. His servant,* MOSCA, *persuades each in turn that he is certain of the inheritance.* CORBACCIO, *one of them, pays a visit to the sick man.*

Mos. Signior Corbaccio!
You are very welcome, sir!
Corb. How does your patron?
Mos. Troth, as he did, sir! no amends.
Corb. What! mends he?
Mos. No, sir! he is rather worse.
Corb. That's well. Where is he?
Mos. Upon his couch, sir! newly fallen asleep.
Corb. Does he sleep well?
Mos. No wink, sir! all this night,
Nor yesterday; but slumbers.
Corb. Good! he shall take
Some counsel of physicians: I have brought him
An opiate here, from mine own doctor——
Mos. He will not hear of drugs.
Corb. Why? I myself
Stood by, while 'twas made; saw all the ingredients;

And know it can not but most gently work.
My life for his, 'tis but to make him sleep.
Volp. Ay, his last sleep if he would take it.
Mos. Sir!
He has no faith in physic.
Corb. Say you? say you?
Mos. He has no faith in physic: he does think,
Most of your doctors are the greater danger,
And worse disease to escape. I often have
Heard him protest, that your physician
Should never be his heir.
Corb. Not I his heir?
Mos. Not your physician, sir.
Corb. O, no! no! no!
I do not mean it.
Mos. No, sir! nor their fees
He can not brook: he says they flay a man,
Before they kill him.
Corb. Right, I do conceive you.
Mos. And then, they do it by experiment;
For which the law not only doth absolve them,
But gives them great reward; and he is loath
To hire his death so.
Corb. It is true, they kill,
With as much licence as a judge.
Mos. Nay, more;
For he but kills, sir! where the law condemns,
And these can kill him too.
Corb. Ay, or me,
Or any man. How does his apoplex?
Is that strong on him still?
Mos. Most violent.
His speech is broken and his eyes are set,
His face drawn longer than 'twas wont.——
Corb. How? how?
Stronger than he was wont?

Mos. No, sir! his face
Drawn longer than 'twas wont.
Corb. O, good!
Mos. His mouth
Is ever gaping, and his eyelids hang.
Corb. Good!
Mos. A freezing numbness stiffens all his joints,
And makes the colour of his flesh like lead.
Corb. 'Tis good!
Mos. His pulse beats slow, and dull.
Corb. Good symptoms still!
Mos. And from his brain——
Corb. Ha! how? not from his brain?
Mos. Yes, sir! and from his brain——
Corb. I conceive you; good!
Mos. Flows a cold sweat, with a continual rheum
Forth the resolvèd corners of his eyes.
Corb. Is it possible? yet I am better, ha!
How does he with the swimming of his head?
Mos. O, sir, 'tis past the scotomy; he now
Hath lost his feeling, and hath left to snort:
You hardly can perceive him that he breathes.
Corb. Excellent! excellent! sure I shall outlast him:
This makes me young again a score of years.
Mos. I was coming for you, sir!
Corb. Has he made his will?
What has he given me?
Mos. No, sir!
Corb. Nothing? ha?
Mos. He has not made his will, sir!
Corb. O, O, O!
What then did Voltore the lawyer here?
Mos. He smelt a carcase, sir! when he but heard
My master was about his testament;
As I did urge him to it for your good——
Corb. He came unto him, did he? I thought so.

Mos. Yes, and presented him this piece of plate.
Corb. To be his heir?
Mos. I do not know, sir!
Corb. True,
I know it too.
Mos. By your own scale, sir!
Corb. Well, I shall prevent him yet. See, Mosca! look;
Here I have brought a bag of bright cecchines,
Will quite weigh down his plate.
Mos. Yea, marry, sir!
This is true physic, this your sacred medicine;
No talk of opiates, to this great elixir.
Corb. 'Tis aurum palpabile, if not potabile.
Mos. It shall be minister'd to him in his bowl.
Corb. Ay, do! do! do!
Mos. Most blessed cordial!
This will recover him.
Corb. Yes, do! do! do!
Mos. I think it were not best, sir!
Corb. What?
Mos. To recover him.
Corb. O, no, no, no! by no means.
Mos. Why, sir! this
Will work some strange effect if he but feel it.
Corb. 'Tis true, therefore forbear! I'll take my venture;
Give me it again!
Mos. At no hand; pardon me;
You shall not do yourself that wrong, sir! I
Will so advise you, you shall have it all.
Corb. How?
Mos. All, sir! 'tis your right, your own; no man
Can claim a part; 'tis yours without a rival,
Decreed by destiny.
Corb. How? how? good Mosca!
Mos. I'll tell you, sir! This fit he shall recover.
Corb. I do conceive you.

Mos. And on first advantage
Of his gain'd sense, will I reimportune him
Unto the making of his testament:
And show him this.
Corb. Good! good!
Mos. 'Tis better yet,
If you will hear, sir!
Corb. Yes, with all my heart.
Mos. Now would I counsel you, make home with speed;
There frame a will; whereto you shall inscribe
My master your sole heir.
Corb. And disinherit
My son?
Mos. O sir! the better; for that colour
Shall make it much more taking.
Corb. O, but colour?
Mos. This will, sir! you shall send it unto me.
Now, when I come to enforce (as I will do)
Your cares, your watchings, and your many prayers,
Your more than many gifts, your this day's present,
And last produce your will: where (without thought,
Or least regard unto your proper issue,
A son so brave, and highly meriting)
The stream of your diverted love hath thrown you
Upon my master, and made him your heir;
He can not be so stupid, or stone-dead,
But out of conscience, and mere gratitude——
Corb. He must pronounce me his?
Mos. 'Tis true.
Corb. This plot
Did I think on before.
Mos. I do believe it.
Corb. Do you not believe it?
Mos. Yes, sir!
Corb. Mine own project.
Mos. Which when he hath done, sir——

Corb. Publish'd me his heir?
Mos. And you so certain to survive him——
Corb. Ay!
Mos. Being so lusty a man——
Corb. 'Tis true.
Mos. Yes, sir——
Corb. I thought on that too. See how he should be
The very organ to express my thoughts!
Mos. You have not only done yourself a good——
Corb. But multiplied it on my son.
Mos. 'Tis right, sir!
Corb. Still my invention.
Mos. 'Las, sir! Heaven knows,
It hath been all my study, all my care
(I even grow grey withal) how to work things——
Corb. I do conceive, sweet Mosca!
Mos. You are he
For whom I labour, here.
Corb. Ay, do! do! do!
I'll straight about it.
Mos. Rook go with you, raven!
Corb. I know thee honest.
Mos. You do lie, sir——
Corb. And——
Mos. Your knowledge is no better than your ears, sir!
Corb. I do not doubt to be a father to thee.
Mos. Nor I to gull my brother of his blessing.
Corb. I may have my youth restored to me; why not?
Mos. Your worship is a precious ass——
Corb. What say'st thou?
Mos. I do desire your worship to make haste, sir!
Corb. 'Tis done, 'tis done; I go.

Exit.

Volp. O, I shall burst;
Let out my sides, let out my sides——

Mos. Contain
Your flux of laughter, sir! you know this hope
Is such a bait it covers any hook.
Volp. O, but thy working, and thy placing it!
I can not hold: good rascal! let me kiss thee:
I never knew thee in so rare a humour.
Mos. Alas, sir! I but do as I am taught;
Follow your grave instructions; give them words,
Pour oil into their ears, and send them hence.
Volp. 'Tis true, 'tis true. What a rare punishment
Is avarice to itself!
Mos. Ay, with our help, sir!
Volp. So many cares, so many maladies,
So many fears attending on old age,
Yea, death so often call'd on, as no wish
Can be more frequent with them, their limbs faint,
Their senses dull, their seeing, hearing, going,
All dead before them; yea, their very teeth,
Their instruments of eating, failing them:
Yet this is reckon'd life! Nay, here was one,
Is now gone home, that wishes to live longer!
Feels not his gout, nor palsy, feigns himself
Younger by scores of years, flatters his age,
With confident belying it, hopes he may
With charms, like Æson, have his youth restored:
And with these thoughts so battens, as if Fate
Would be as easily cheated on as he:
And all turns air! Who's that there, now? a third!
Another knocks.
Mos. Close to your couch again! I hear his voice.
It is Corvino, our spruce merchant.
Volp. Dead.
Mos. Another bout, sir! with your eyes. Who's there?
CORVINO, *a Merchant, enters.*
Mos. Signior Corvino! come most wish'd for! O,
How happy were you, if you knew it now!

Corv. Why? what? wherein?
Mos. The tardy hour is come, sir!
Corv. He is not dead?
Mos. Not dead, sir! but as good;
He knows no man.
Corv. How shall I do then?
Mos. Why? sir!
Corv. I have brought him here a pearl.
Mos. Perhaps he has
So much remembrance left, as to know you, sir!
He still calls on you: nothing but your name
Is in his mouth: is your pearl orient? sir!
Corv. Venice was never owner of the like.
Volp. Signior Corvino!
Mos. Hark.
Volp. Signior Corvino!
Mos. He calls you; step and give it him! He's here, sir!
And he has brought you a rich pearl.
Corv. How do you? sir!
Tell him it doubles the twelfth caract!
Mos. Sir!
He can not understand, his hearing's gone:
And yet it comforts him to see you——
Corv. Say,
I have a diamond for him too!
Mos. Best shew it, sir!
Put it into his hand; 'tis only there
He apprehends: he has his feelings yet.
See how he grasps it!
Corv. Alas, good gentleman!
How pitiful the sight is!
Mos. Tut, forget, sir!
The weeping of an heir should still be laughter,
Under a visor.
Corv. Why, am I his heir?
Mos. Sir, I am sworn, I may not show the will,

Till he be dead : but, here has been Corbaccio,
Here has been Voltore, here were others too,
I can not number them, they were so many,
All gaping here for legacies ; but I,
Taking the vantage of his naming you,
(Signior Corvino, Signior Corvino) took
Paper, and pen, and ink, and there I ask'd him,
Whom he would have his heir? Corvino. Who
Should be executor? Corvino. And
To any question he was silent to,
I still interpreted the nods, he made
Through weakness, for consent; and sent home the others,
Nothing bequeath'd them, but to cry, and curse.

Corv. O, my dear Mosca! Does he not perceive us?

Mos. No more than a blind harper. He knows no man,
No face of friend, nor name of any servant,
Who it was that fed him last, or gave him drink.

MOSCA *is even willing to kill his Master, to oblige the good* CORVINO, *but* CORVINO *will not be seen in it.*

Corv. Do as you will, but I'll begone.

Mos. Be so ;
It is your presence makes him last so long.

Corv. I pray you use no violence!

Mos. No, sir! why?
Why should you be thus scrupulous? Pray you, sir!

Corv. Nay, at your discretion.

Mos. Well, good sir! be gone.

Corv. I will not trouble him now, to take my pearl.

Mos. Pooh! nor your diamond. What a needless care
Is this afflicts you? Is not all here yours?
Am not I here, whom you have made your creature,
That owe my being to you?

Corv. Grateful Mosca!
Thou art my friend, my fellow, my companion,
My partner, and shall share in all my fortunes.

THE ALCHEMIST.

SIR EPICURE MAMMON, *deceived by* SUBTLE, *an Alchemist, gloats in prospect on what he will do with the Philosopher's Stone. He is awaiting the result of the last experiments, in* SUBTLE'S *house, when his friend* SURLY *visits him there.*

Mam. Come on, sir! Now you set your foot on shore
In *novo orbe.* Here's the rich Peru;
And there within, sir! are the golden mines,
Great Solomon's Ophir! He was sailing to it
Three years; but we have reach'd it in ten months.
This is the day wherein to all my friends
I will pronounce the happy words—Be rich!

. . . . . .

And unto thee I speak it first: Be rich!
Where is my Subtle there? Within ho!

FACE, SUBTLE'S *man, answers.*

Face. Sir! he'll come to you by and by.
Mam. That's his fire-drake,
His Lungs, his Zephyrus, he that puffs his coals
Till he firk Nature up in her own centre.
You are not faithful, sir! This night I'll change
All that is metal in my house to gold:
And early in the morning will I send
To all the plumbers and the pewterers,
And buy their tin and lead up; and to Lothbury,
For all the copper.
Sur. What, and turn that too?
Mam. Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,
And make them perfect Indies! You admire now?
Sur. No! 'faith.
Mam. But when you see the effects of the great medicine!
Of which one part projected on a hundred
Of Mercury, or Venus, or the Moon,

Shall turn it to as many of the Sun;
Nay, to a thousand, so *ad infinitum:*
You will believe me.
Sur. Yes! when I see it, I will.
Mam. Ha! why,
Do you think I fable with you? I assure you,
He that has once the flower of the Sun,
The perfect ruby, which we call Elixir,
Not only can do that, but by its virtue
Can confer honour, love, respect, long life,
Give safety, valour, yea, and victory
To whom he will. In eight and twenty days
I'll make an old man of fourscore a child.
Sur. No doubt; he's that already.
Mam. Nay, I mean,
Restore his years, renew him like an eagle,
To the fifth age;
. . . . . .
'Tis the secret
Of Nature naturized 'gainst all infections,
Cures all diseases, coming of all causes;
A month's grief in a day; a year's in twelve;
And of what age soever, in a month;
Past all the doses of your drugging doctors.
I'll undertake withal to fright the plague
Out of the kingdom in three months.
Sur. And I'll
Be bound, the players shall sing your praises, then,
Without their poets.
Mam. Sir! I'll do it. Meantime
I'll give away so much unto my man,
Shall serve the whole city with preservative
Weekly; each house his dose, and at the rate——
Sur. As he that built the waterwork, does with water!
Mam. You are incredulous.
Sur. 'Faith, I have a humour,

I would not willingly be gull'd. Your stone
Can not transmute me.

Mam. Pertinax Surly!
Will you believe antiquity? records?
I'll show you a book, where Moses, and his sister,
And Solomon, have written of the art;
Ay, and a treatise penn'd by Adam.

Sur. How?

Mam. Of the philosopher's stone, and in High Dutch.

Sur. Did Adam write, sir! in High Dutch?

Mam. He did:
Which proves it was the primitive tongue.

Sur. What paper?

Mam. On cedar-board.

Sur. O, that indeed, they say,
Will last 'gainst worms.

Mam. 'Tis like your Irish wood
'Gainst cobwebs. I have a piece of Jason's fleece too,
Which was no other than a book of alchemy,
Writ in large sheepskin, a good fat ram-vellum.
Such was Pythagoras' thigh, Pandora's tub,
And all that fable of Medea's charms,
The manner of our work: the bulls, our furnace,
Still breathing fire; our *Argent-vive*, the dragon;
The dragon's teeth, mercury sublimate,
That keeps the whiteness, hardness, and the biting:
And they are gather'd into Jason's helm
(The alembic) and then sow'd in Mars his field,
And thence sublimed so often, till they are fix'd.
Both this, the Hesperian garden, Cadmus' story,
Jove's shower, the boon of Midas, Argus' eyes,
Boccace his Demogorgon, thousands more,
All abstract riddles of our stone.

FACE *enters.*

How now?
Do we succeed? is our day come? and holds it?

Face. The evening will set red upon you, sir!
You have colour for it, crimson: the red ferment
Has done his office. Three hours hence prepare you
To see projection!
Mam. Pertinax, my Surly!
Again I say to thee aloud, *Be rich!*
This day thou shalt have ingots, and to-morrow
Give lords the affront. Is it, my Zephyrus! right?
Blushes the bolt's head?
Face. Like a wench with child, sir!
That were but now discover'd to her master.
Mam. Excellent witty Lungs! My only care is,
Where to get stuff enough now, to project on.
This town will not half serve me.
Face. No? sir! buy
The covering off of churches.
Mam. That is true.
Face. Yes!
Let them stand bare, as do their auditory;
Or cap them new with shingles.
Mam. No! good thatch:
Thatch will lie light upon the rafters, Lungs!
Lungs! I will manumit thee from the furnace;
I will restore thee thy complexion, Puffe!
Lost in the embers; and repair this brain
Hurt with the fume o' the metals.
Face. I have blown, sir!
Hard for your worship; thrown by many a coal,
When 'twas not beech; weigh'd those I put in, just,
To keep your heat still even; these blear'd eyes
Have waked to read your several colours, sir!
Of the pale citron, the green lion, the crow,
The peacock's tail, the plumèd swan——
Mam. And lastly,
Thou hast descryed the flower, the *sanguis agni?*
Face. Yes, sir!

Mam. Where's master?
Face. At his prayers, sir! he,
Good man, he is doing his devotions
For the success.

. . . . . .

We will be brave, Puffe! now we have the medicine.
My meat shall all come in in Indian shells,
Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, and rubies;
The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels,
Boil'd in the spirit of Sol, and dissolved pearl
(Apicius' diet 'gainst the epilepsy),
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
Headed with diamond and carbuncle.
My footboy shall eat pheasants, calver'd salmons,
Knots, godwits, lampreys: I myself will have
The beards of barbels served, instead of salads;
Oil'd mushrooms; and the swelling unctuous paps
Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
Dress'd with an exquisite and poignant sauce;
For which, I'll say unto my cook, "There's gold;
Go forth, and be a knight!"
Face. Sir! I'll go look
A little, how it heightens.
Mam. Do!—My shirts
I'll have of taffeta-sarsnet, soft and light
As cobwebs; and, for all my other raiment,
It shall be such as might provoke the Persian,
Were he to teach the world riot anew.
My gloves of fishes' and birds' skins, perfumed
With gums of paradise, and eastern air.
Sur. And do you think to have the stone with this?
Mam. No! I do think to have all this with the stone.

GEORGE CHAPMAN.

1557-9—1634.

BUSSY D'AMBOIS.

BUSSY D'AMBOIS, *a poor soldier, having been grossly insulted by three Courtiers, challenges all three. Two Lords, who had witnessed the insult, take his part and join in the challenge.* A NUNTIUS (*Messenger*) *relates, to* KING HENRY *the third of France* (*where the scene occurs*), *the circumstances of the fight:* GUISE, BEAUPRÉ, *and other Lords present.*

Nuntius. I saw fierce D'Ambois and his two brave friends
Enter the field, and at their heels their foes,
Which were the famous soldiers, Barrisor,
L'Anou, and Pyrrhot, great in deeds of arms :
All which arrived at the evenest piece of earth
The field afforded, the three challengers
Turn'd head, drew all their rapiers, and stood rank'd;
When face to face the three defendants met them,
Alike prepared, and resolute alike.
Like bonfires of contributory wood
Every man's look show'd, fed with either's spirit;
As one had been a mirror to another,
Like forms of life and death each took from other :
And so were life and death mix'd at their heights,
That you could see no fear of death (for life)
Nor love of life (for death) : but in their brows
Pyrrho's opinion in great letters shone ;
That "life and death in all respects are one."

Henry. Pass'd there no sort of words at their encounter ?

Nuntius. As Hector 'twixt the hosts of Greece and Troy,
When Paris and the Spartan king should end
The nine years' war, held up his brazen lance
For signal that both hosts should cease from arms,
And hear him speak; so Barrisor (advised)
Advanced his naked rapier 'twixt both sides,

Ripp'd up the quarrel, and compared six lives
Then laid in balance with six idle words;
Offer'd remission and contrition too:
Or else that he and D'Ambois might conclude
The others' dangers. D'Ambois liked the last:
But Barrisor's friends (being equally engaged
In the main quarrel) never would expose
His life alone to that they all deserved.
And (for the other offer of remission)
D'Ambois (that like a laurel put in fire
Sparkled and spit) did much much more than scorn
That his wrong should incense him so like chaff
To go so soon out, and, like lighted paper,
Approve his spirit at once both fire and ashes:
So drew they lots, and in them fates appointed
That Barrisor should fight with fiery D'Ambois;
Pyrrhot with Melynell; with Brisac, L'Anou:
And then like flame and powder they commix'd,
So sprightly, that I wish'd they had been spirits;
That the ne'er-shutting wounds, they needs must open,
Might as they open'd shut, and never kill.
But D'Ambois' sword (that lighten'd as it flew)
Shot like a pointed comet at the face
Of manly Barrisor; and there it stuck:
Thrice pluck'd he at it, and thrice drew on thrusts
From him, that of himself was free as fire;
Who thrust still, as he pluck'd, yet (past belief)
He with his subtle eye, hand, body, 'scaped;
At last the deadly bitten point tugg'd off,
On fell his yet undaunted foe so fiercely
That (only made more horrid with his wound)
Great D'Ambois shrunk, and gave a little ground:
But soon return'd, redoubled in his danger,
And at the heart of Barrisor seal'd his anger.
Then, as in Arden I have seen an oak
Long shook with tempests, and his lofty top

Bent to his root, which being at length made loose
(Even groaning with his weight) he gan to nod
This way and that, as loath his curled brows
(Which he had oft wrapt in the sky with storms)
Should stoop; and yet, his radical fibres burst,
Storm-like he fell, and hid the fear-cold earth:
So fell stout Barrisor, that had stood the shocks
Of ten set battles in your Highness' war
'Gainst the sole soldier of the world, Navarre.

Guise. O piteous and horrid murder!

Beaupré. Such a life
Methinks had metal in it to survive
An age of men.

Henry. Such often soonest end.
Thy felt report calls on; we long to know
On what events the other have arrived.

Nuntius. Sorrow and fury, like two opposite fumes
Met in the upper region of a cloud,
At the report made by this worthy's fall,
Brake from the earth, and with them rose revenge,
Entering with fresh powers his two noble friends:
And under that odds fell surcharged Brisac,
The friend of D'Ambois, before fierce L'Anou;
Which D'Ambois seeing, as I once did see,
In my young travels through Armenia,
An angry unicorn in his full career
Charge with too swift a foot a jeweler
That watch'd him for the treasure of his brow,
And, ere he could get shelter of a tree,
Nail him with his rich antler to the earth,—
So D'Ambois ran upon revenged L'Anou,
Who eyeing the eager point borne in his face,
And giving back, fell back, and in his fall
His foe's uncurbed sword stopp'd in his heart:
By which time, all the life-strings of the two other
Were cut, and both fell, as their spirit flew

Upwards ; and still hunt honour at the view.
And now, of all the six, sole D'Ambois stood
Untouch'd, save only with the others' blood.
Henry. All slain outright but he ?
Nuntius. All slain outright but he :
Who kneeling in the warm life of his friends
(All freckled with the blood his rapier rain'd)
He kiss'd their pale lips, and bade both farewell.

JOHN WEBSTER.

15 . . —1640-50.

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI.

The DUCHESS *has a very noble Steward (not nobly born). She loves and will marry him. She bids her maid* CARIOLA *to summon him.*

Duchess. Is Antonio come ?
Cariola. He attends you.
Duch. Good dear soul !
Leave me ; but place thyself behind the arras,
Where thou may'st overhear us ! Wish me good speed !
For I am going into a wilderness,
Where I shall find nor path nor friendly clue
To be my guide.

CARIOLA *withdraws as* ANTONIO *enters.*

I sent for you. Sit down !
Take pen and ink, and write ! Are you ready ?
Antonio. Yes !
Duch. What did I say ?
Ant. That I should write somewhat.
Duch. O, I remember.
After these triumphs and this large expense,
It's fit, like thrifty husbands, we inquire
What's laid up for to-morrow.
Ant. So please your beauteous Excellence.
Duch. Beauteous indeed ! I thank you ; I look young
For your sake. You have taken my cares upon you.

Ant. I'll fetch your Grace the particulars of your revenue and expense.

Duch. O, you're an upright treasurer : but you mistook,
For when I said I meant to make inquiry
What's laid up for to-morrow, I did mean
What's laid up yonder for me.

Ant. Where ?

Duch. In heaven.
I am making my will (as 'tis fit princes should,
In perfect memory) ; and I pray, sir ! tell me,
Were not one better make it smiling, thus,
Than in deep groans and terrible ghastly looks,
As if the gifts we parted with procured
That violent distraction ?

Ant. O, much better.

Duch. If I had a husband now, this care were quit.
But I intend to make you overseer :
What good deed shall we first remember ? say !

Ant. Begin with that first good deed, began in the world
After man's creation, the sacrament of marriage.
I'd have you first provide for a good husband ;
Give him all !

Duch. All ?

Ant. Yes ! your excellent self.

Duch. In a winding sheet ?

Ant. In a couple.

Duch. St. Winifred, that were a strange will !

Ant. 'Twere stranger if there were no will in you
To marry again.

Duch. What do you think of marriage ?

Ant. I take it, as those that deny purgatory ;
It locally contains or heaven or hell,—
There's no third place in't.

Duch. How do you affect it ?

Ant. My banishment, feeding my melancholy,
Would often reason thus.

Duch. Pray let us hear it.
Ant. Say a man never marry, nor have children,
What takes that from him? only the bare name
Of being a father, or the weak delight
To see the little wanton ride a-cock-horse
Upon a painted stick, or hear him chatter
Like a taught starling.
Duch. Fie, fie! what's all this?
One of your eyes is bloodshot; use my ring to't!
They say 'tis very sovran: 'twas my wedding ring,
And I did vow never to part with it
But to my second husband.
Ant. You have parted with it now.
Duch. Yes, to help your eyesight.
Ant. You have made me stark blind.
Duch. How?
Ant. There is a saucy and ambitious devil,
Is dancing in this circle.
Duch. Remove him!
Ant. How?
Duch. There needs small conjuration, when your finger
May do it; thus: is it fit?

She puts the ring on his finger. He kneels.

Ant. What said you?
Duch. Sir!
This goodly roof of yours is too low built;
I can not stand upright in't nor discourse,
Without I raise it higher: raise yourself;
Or, if you please my hand to help you: so!
Ant. Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,
That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms,
But in fair lightsome lodgings, and is girt
With the wild noise of prattling visitants,
Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
Conceive not I'm so stupid, but I aim

Whereto your favours tend : but he's a fool
That, being a-cold, would thrust his hands in the fire
To warm them.

Duch. So, now the ground's broke,
You may discover what a wealthy mine
I make you lord of.

Ant. O, my unworthiness!

Duch. You were ill to sell yourself.
This darkening of your worth is not like that
Which tradesmen use in the city ; their false lights
Are to rid bad wares off : and I must tell you,
If you will know where breathes a complete man,
(I speak it without flattery) turn your eyes,
And progress through yourself.

Ant. Were there nor heaven nor hell,
I should be honest : I have long served virtue,
And ne'er ta'en wages of her.—

Duch. Now she pays it.—
The misery of us that are born great!
We are forced to woo, because none dare woo us :
And as a tyrant doubles with his words,
And fearfully equivocates, so we
Are forced to express our violent passions
In riddles, and in dreams, and leave the path
Of simple virtue, which was never made
To seem the thing it is not. Go! go! brag
You have left me heartless ; mine is in your bosom ;
I hope 'twill multiply love there : you do tremble :
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh,
To fear more than to love me ; sir! be confident.
What is it distracts you? This is flesh and blood, sir!
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake, man!
I do here put off all vain ceremony,
And only do appear to you a young widow:
I use but half a blush in't.

Ant. Truth speak for me!
I will remain the constant sanctuary
Of your good name.
Duch. I thank you, gentle Love!
And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt
(Being now my steward), here upon your lips
I sign your *quietus est:* this you should have begg'd now.
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
As fearful to devour them too soon.
Ant. But, for your brothers——
Duch. Do not think of them!
All discord without this circumference
Is only to be pitied, and not fear'd:
Yet, should they know it, time will easily
Scatter the tempest.
Ant. These words should be mine,
And all the parts you have spoke; if some part of it
Would not have savour'd flattery.

CARIOLA *comes forward.*

Duch. Kneel!
Ant. Ha!
Duch. Be not amazed! this woman's of my council.
I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber
Per verba præsenti is absolute marriage;
Bless, heaven! this sacred Gordian, which let violence
Never untwine.
Ant. And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,
Be still in motion!
Duch. Quickening, and make
The like soft music!

. . . . . .

Car. Whether the spirit of greatness, or of woman,
Reign most in her, I know not.

Her noble brothers, angry at her marriage, shut her up in prison, and torment her with various cruel devices. BOSOLA, *the tool of her*

brother FERDINAND, *shows her the bodies, counterfeited in wax as dead, of her husband and children. She is kept waking with noises of Madmen; and at last, by her brothers' orders, she is put to death.*

Duchess (*to Cariola*). What hideous noise was that?
Car. 'Tis the wild consort
Of madmen, lady! which your tyrant brother
Hath placed about your lodging: this tyranny
I think was never practised till this hour.
Duch. Indeed I thank him; nothing but noise and folly
Can keep me in my right wits, whereas reason
And silence make me stark mad; sit down,
Discourse to me some dismal tragedy!
Car. O, 'twill increase your melancholy.
Duch. Thou art deceived.
To hear of greater grief would lessen mine.
This is a prison?
Car. Yes: but you shall live
To shake this durance off.
Duch. Thou art a fool.
The robin-redbreast and the nightingale
Never live long in cages.
Car. Pray, dry your eyes!
What think you of? madam!
Duch. Of nothing:
When I muse thus, I sleep.
Car. Like a madman, with your eyes open?
Duch. Dost thou think we shall know one another
In the other world?
Car. Yes, out of question.
Duch. O that it were possible we might
But hold some two days' conference with the dead!
From them I should learn somewhat I am sure
I never shall know here. I'll tell thee a miracle;
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow.
The heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass,
The earth of flaming sulphur, yet I am not mad.

I am acquainted with sad misery,
As the tann'd galley-slave is with his oar;
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,
And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like now?

Car. Like to your picture in the gallery:
A deal of life in show, but none in practice:
Or rather, like some reverend monument
Whose ruins are even pitied.

Duch. Very proper:
And Fortune seems only to have her eyesight,
To behold my tragedy. How now,
What noise is that?

A Servant enters.

Serv. I am come to tell you,
Your brother hath intended you some sport.
A great physician, when the Pope was sick
Of a deep melancholy, presented him
With several sorts of madmen, which wild object
(Being full of change and sport) forced him to laugh,
And so the imposthume broke: the selfsame cure
The duke intends on you.

Duch. Let them come in.

Here follows a Dance of sundry sorts of Madmen, with music answerable thereto: after which BOSOLA (*like an old man*) *enters.*

Duch. Is he mad too?

Bos. I am come to make thy tomb.

Duch. Ha! my tomb?
Thou speak'st as if I lay upon my deathbed,
Gasping for breath: dost thou perceive me sick?

Bos. Yes, and the more dangerously, since thy sickness is insensible.

Duch. Thou art not mad sure: dost know me?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Who am I?

Bos. Thou art a box of wormseed; at best but a salvatory of

green mummy. What's this flesh? a little crudded milk, fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker than those paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in, more contemptible, since ours is to preserve earth-worms. Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in the body: this world is like her little turf of grass; and the heaven o'er our heads, like her looking-glass, only gives us a miserable knowledge of the small compass of our prison.

Duch. Am not I thy duchess?

Bos. Thou art some great woman sure, for riot begins to sit on thy forehead (clad in gray hairs) twenty years sooner than on a merry milk-maid's. Thou sleepest worse than if a mouse should be forced to take up her lodging in a cat's ear: a little infant that breeds its teeth, should it lie with thee, would cry out, as if thou wert the more unquiet bed-fellow.

Duch. I am Duchess of Malfi still.

Bos. That makes thy sleeps so broken:

Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright;
But, look'd too near, have neither heat nor light.

Duch. Thou art very plain.

Bos. My trade is to flatter the dead, not the living.
I am a tomb-maker.

Duch. And thou comest to make my tomb?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Let me be a little merry.
Of what stuff wilt thou make it?

Bos. Nay, resolve me first; of what fashion?

Duch. Why, do we grow fantastical in our death-bed?
Do we affect fashion in the grave?

Bos. Most ambitiously. Princes' images on their tombs do not lie as they were wont, seeming to pray up to heaven; but with their hands under their cheeks (as if they died of the toothache): they are not carved with their eyes fixed upon the stars; but, as their minds were wholly bent upon the world, the selfsame way they seem to turn their faces.

Duch. Let me know fully therefore the effect
Of this thy dismal preparation,
This talk fit for a charnel!
Bos. Now I shall.

A coffin, cords, and a bell produced.

Here is a present from your princely brothers;
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings
Last benefit, last sorrow.
Duch. Let me see it!
I have so much obedience in my blood,
I wish it in their veins to do them good.
Bos. This is your last presence-chamber.
Car. O my sweet lady!
Duch. Peace! it affrights not me.
Bos. I am the common bellman,
That usually is sent to condemn'd persons
The night before they suffer.
Duch. Even now thou saidst,
Thou wast a tomb-maker.
Bos. 'Twas to bring you
By degrees to mortification. Listen!

He sings a dirge.

Car. Hence, villains! tyrants! murderers! alas!
What will you do with my lady? Call for help!
Duch. To whom? to our next neighbours? They are mad folks.
Farewell, Cariola!
I pray thee look thou givest my little boy
Some syrup for his cold; and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep.—Now what you please;
What death?
Bos. Strangling. Here are your executioners.
Duch. I forgive them.
The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough of the lungs,
Would do as much as they do.
Bos. Doth not death fright you?

Duch. Who would be afraid on't,
Knowing to meet such excellent company
In the other world?
Bos. Yet methinks,
The manner of your death should much afflict you;
This cord should terrify you.
Duch. Not a whit.
What would it pleasure me to have my throat cut
With diamonds? or to be smother'd
With cassia? or to be shot to death with pearls?
I know, death hath ten thousand several doors
For men to take their exits: and 'tis found
They go on such strange geometrical hinges,
You may open them both ways; anyway (for heaven's sake)
So I were out of your whispering! Tell my brothers,
That I perceive, death (now I'm well awake)
Best gift is they can give or I can take.
I would fain put off my last woman's fault;
I'd not be tedious to you. . . .
Pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength
Must pull down heaven upon me!
Yet stay! heaven-gates are not so highly arch'd
As princes' palaces; they that enter there
Must go upon their knees. Come, violent death!
Serve for mandragora to make me sleep.
Go tell my brothers, when I am laid out,
They then may feed in quiet!

They strangle her kneeling. FERDINAND *enters.*

Ferd. Is she dead?
Bos. She is what you would have her. . .
Fix your eye here!
Ferd. Constantly!
Bos. Do you not weep?
Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out.
The element of water moistens the earth,
But blood flies upwards and bedews the heavens.

Ferd. Cover her face! mine eyes dazzle : she died young.
Bos. I think not so : her infelicity
Seem'd to have years too many.
Ferd. She and I were twins :
And should I die this instant, I had lived
Her time to a minute.

THE DEVIL'S LAW-CASE.

CONTARINO *and* ERCOLE, *in love with the same Lady, must needs fight for her possession.*

Con. Sir! my love to you has proclaim'd you one
Whose word was still led by a noble thought,
And that thought follow'd by as fair a deed :
Deceive not that opinion! we were students
At Padua together, and have long
To the world's eye shown like friends.
Was it hearty on your part to me?
Erc. Unfeigned.
Con. You are false
To the good thought I held of you ; and now,
Join the worst part of man to you, your malice,
To uphold that falsehood. Sacred innocence
Is fled your bosom. Signior! I must tell you ;
To draw the picture of unkindness truly,
Is to express two that have dearly loved,
And fallen at variance. 'Tis a wonder to me,
Knowing my interest in the fair Jolenta,
That you should love her.
Erc. Compare her beauty and my youth together,
And you will find the fair effects of love
No miracle at all.
Con. Yes! it will prove
Prodigious to you : I must stay your voyage.
Erc. Your warrant must be mighty.
Con. 'T has a seal
From heaven to do it, since you'd ravish from me

What's there entitled mine; and yet I vow,
By the essential front of spotless virtue,
I have compassion of both our youths:
To approve which, I have not taken the way
Like an Italian, to cut your throat
By practice that had given you now for dead
And never frown'd upon you. . .
You must fight with me.

Erc. I will, sir!

Con. And instantly.

Erc. I will haste before you. Point whither!

Con. Why, you speak nobly; and, for this fair dealing,
Were the rich jewel which we vary for
A thing to be divided, by my life,
I would be well content to give you half:
But since 'tis vain to think we can be friends,
'Tis needful one of us be taken away
From being the other's enemy.

Erc. Yet, methinks,
This looks not like a quarrel.

Con. Not a quarrel!

Erc. You have not apparel'd your fury well;
It goes too plain, like a scholar.

Con. It is an ornament
Makes it more terrible; and you shall find it
A weighty injury, and attended on
By discreet valour; because I do not strike you,
Or give you the lie (such foul preparatives
Would show like the stale injury of wine),
I reserve my rage to sit on my sword's point;
Which a great quantity of your best blood
Can't satisfy.

Erc. You promise well to yourself.
Shall's have no seconds?

Con. None, for fear of prevention.

Erc. The length of our weapons——

Con. We'll fit them by the way :
So whether our time calls us to live or die,
Let us do both like noble gentlemen,
And true Italians.
Erc. For that, let me embrace you.
Con. Methinks, being an Italian, I trust you
To come somewhat too near me :
But your jealousy gave that embrace, to try
If I were arm'd—did it not ?
Erc. No, believe me !
I take your heart to be sufficient proof
Without a privy coat : and, for my part,
A taffeta is all the shirt of mail
I am arm'd with.
Con. You deal equally.

THOMAS MIDDLETON.

1570 ?—1627.

WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN.

LIVIA *pretends great regard for a poor* WIDOW, *seeking to become acquainted with her daughter-in-law, toward whom the* DUKE *has evil designs.*

Liv. Widow ! come, come, I have great quarrel to you.
'Faith, I must chide you that you must be sent for ;
You make yourself so strange, never come at us ;
And yet so near a neighbour, and unkind.
Troth, you're to blame ; you can not be more welcome
To any house in Florence, that I'll tell you.
Wid. My thanks must needs acknowledge so much, madam !
Liv. How can you be so strange then ? I sit here
Sometimes whole days together without company,
When business draws this gentleman from home,
And should be happy in society
Which I so well affect as that of yours.

I know you're alone too ; why should not we
Like two kind neighbours then supply the wants
Of one another, having tongue-discourse,
Experience in the world, and such kind helps,
To laugh down time and meet age merrily ?

Wid. Age, madam ! you speak mirth : 'tis at my door,
But a long journey from your ladyship yet.

Liv. My faith, I'm nine and thirty, every stroke, wench !
And 'tis a general observation
'Mongst knights : wives, or widows, we account ourselves
Then old, when young men's eyes leave looking at us.
Come, now I have thy company, I'll not part with it
Till after supper.

Wid. Yes, I must crave pardon, madam !

Liv. I swear you shall stay supper; we have no strangers, woman !
None but my sojourners and I, this gentleman
And the young heir his ward ; you know your company.

Wid. Some other time I will make bold with you, madam !

Liv. 'Faith she shall not go.
Do you think I'll be forsworn ?

Wid. 'Tis a great while
Till supper-time ; I'll take my leave then now, madam !
And come again in the evening, since your ladyship
Will have it so.

Liv. In the evening ! by my troth, wench !
I'll keep you while I have you : you've great business sure,
To sit alone at home : I wonder strangely
What pleasure you take in't. Were't to me now,
I should be ever at one neighbour's house
Or other all day long ; having no charge,
Or none to chide you, if you go or stay,
Who may live merrier, ay ! or more at heart's ease ?
Come, we'll to chess or draughts ; there are a hundred tricks
To drive out time till supper, never fear 't, wench !

A chess-board is set.

Wid. I'll but make one step home, and return straight, madam!

Liv. Come, I'll not trust you, you make more excuses
To your kind friends than ever I knew any.
What business can you have, if you be sure
You've lock'd the doors? and, that being all you have,
I know you're careful on't: one afternoon
So much to spend here! say I should entreat you now
To lie a night or two, or a week, with me,
Or leave your own house for a month together;
It were a kindness that long neighbourhood
And friendship might well hope to prevail in:
Would you deny such a request? I' faith,
Speak truth and freely!

Wid. I were then uncivil, madam!

Liv. Go to then, set your men! we'll have whole nights
Of mirth together, ere we be much older, wench!

Wid. As good now tell her then, for she will know it;
I've always found her a most friendly lady.

(*Aside.*)

Liv. Why, widow! where's your mind?

Wid. Troth, even at home, madam!
To tell you truth, I left a gentlewoman
Even sitting alone, which is uncomfortable,
Especially to young bloods.

Liv. Another excuse.

Wid. No, as I hope for health, madam! that's a truth;
Please you to send and see!

Liv. What gentlewoman? pish!

Wid. Wife to my son indeed.

Liv. Now I beshrew you.
Could you be so unkind to her and me,
To come and not bring her? 'faith, 'tis not friendly.

Wid. I fear'd to be too bold.

Liv. Too bold! O, what's become

Of the true hearty love was wont to be
'Mongst neighbours in old time?
Wid. And she's a stranger, madam!
Liv. The more should be her welcome: when is courtesy
In better practice, than when 'tis employ'd
In entertaining strangers? I could chide ye, 'faith.
Leave her behind, poor gentlewoman—alone too!
Make some amends, and send for her betimes—go!
Wid. Please you command one of your servants, madam!
Liv. Within there!—
Attend the gentlewoman!——

WILLIAM ROWLEY.

A NEW WONDER.

FOSTER, *a wealthy merchant, has a profligate brother,* STEPHEN, *who, being thrown into prison, is cared for by* FOSTER'S *son* ROBERT. *For which* ROBERT *is disinherited by his father.* FOSTER, *in his turn poor, is in prison.* STEPHEN, *meanwhile become rich, adopts his nephew on condition that he shall not assist his father. Filial piety prevails.* ROBERT *seeks his father in the prison.*

Foster. O, torment to my soul! what makest thou here?
Can not the picture of my misery
Be drawn, and hung out to the eyes of men,
But thou must come to scorn and laugh at it?
Rob. Dear sir! I come to thrust my back under your load,
To make the burthen lighter.
Fos. Hence from my sight, dissembling villain! go:
Thine uncle sends defiance to my woe,
And thou must bring it: hence, thou basilisk,
That kill'st me with thine eyes! Nay, never kneel!
These scornful mocks more than my woes I feel.
Rob. Alas! I mock ye not, but come in love
And natural duty, sir! to beg your blessing;
And for mine uncle——

Fos. Him and thee I curse.
I'll starve ere I eat bread from his purse,
Or from thy hand: out, villain! tell that cur,
Thy barking uncle, that I lie not here
Upon my bed of riot, as he did,
Cover'd with all the villainies which man
Had ever woven; tell him I lie not so;
It was the hand of Heaven struck me thus low,
And I do thank it. Get thee gone, I say,
Or I shall curse thee, strike thee; prithee away!
Or if thou'lt laugh thy fill at my poor state,
Then stay, and listen to the prison grate,
And hear thy father, an old wretched man,
That yesterday had thousands, beg and cry
To get a penny! O, my misery!
Rob. Dear sir! for pity hear me.
Fos. Upon my curse I charge, no nearer come;
I'll be no father to so vile a son.
Rob. O my abortive fate!
Why for my good am I thus paid with hate?
From this sad place of Ludgate here I freed
An uncle, and I lost a father for it;
Now is my father here, whom if I succour,
I then must lose my uncle's love and favour.
My father once being rich, and uncle poor,
I him relieving was thrust forth of doors
Baffled, reviled, and disinherited.
Now mine own father here must beg for bread,
Mine uncle being rich; and yet, if I
Feed him, myself must beg. O misery!
How bitter is thy taste: yet I will drink
Thy strongest poison; fret what mischief can,
I'll feed my father; though like the pelican,
I peck mine own breast for him.

His Father appears above at the Grate, a Box hanging down.

Fos. Bread, bread, one penny to buy a loaf of bread, for the tender mercy!

Rob. O me, my shame! I know that voice full well;
I'll help thy wants although thou curse me still.

He stands where he is unseen by his Father.

Fos. Bread! bread! some christian man send back
Your charity to a number of poor prisoners!
One penny for the tender mercy—

ROBERT *puts in money.*

The hand of Heaven reward you, gentle sir!
Never may you want, never feel misery;
Let blessings in unnumber'd measure grow,
And fall upon your head, where'er you go!

Rob. O happy comfort! curses to the ground
First struck me: now with blessings I am crown'd.

Fos. Bread! bread! for the tender mercy, one penny for a loaf of bread!

Rob. I'll buy more blessings: take thou all my store;
I'll keep no coin and see my father poor.

Fos. Good angels guard you, sir! my prayers shall be
That Heaven may bless you for this charity.

Rob. If he knew me, sure he would not say so:
Yet I have comfort, if by any means
I get a blessing from my father's hands.
How cheap are good prayers! a poor penny buys
That, by which man up in a minute flies
And mounts to heaven.

STEPHEN *comes by.*

O me! mine uncle sees me.

Steph. Now, sir! what makes you here
So near the prison?

Rob. I was going, sir!
To buy meat for a poor bird I have,
That sits so sadly in the cage of late,
I think he'll die for sorrow.

Steph. So, sir!
Your pity will not quit your pains, I fear me.
I shall find that bird (I think) to be that churlish wretch
Your father, that now has taken
Shelter here in Ludgate. Go to, sir! urge me not,
You'd best, I have given you warning, fawn not on him,
Nor come not near him if you'll have my love.
Rob. 'Las! sir! that lamb
Were most unnatural that should hate the dam.
Steph. Lamb me no lambs, sir!
Rob. Good uncle! 'las! you know, when you lay here,
I succour'd you: so let me now help him.
Steph. Yes! as he did me;
To laugh and triumph at my misery.
You freed me with his gold, but 'gainst his will:
For him I might have rotted, and lain still.
So shall he now.
Rob. Alack the day!
Steph. If him thou pity, 'tis thine own decay.
Fos. Bread! bread! some charitable man remember the poor prisoners! Bread! for the tender mercy, one penny!
Rob. O listen, uncle, that's my poor father's voice.
Steph. There let him howl! Get you gone, and come not near him.
Rob. O my soul,
What tortures dost thou feel! earth ne'er shall find
A son so true, yet forced to be unkind.

ROBERT *disobeys his Uncle's injunctions, and again visits his Father.*

FOSTER. WIFE. ROBERT.

Fos. Ha! what art thou? Call for the keeper there,
And thrust him out of doors, or lock me up!
Wife. O, 'tis your son.
Fos. I know him not.
I am no king, unless of scorn and woe:
Why kneel'st thou then? why dost thou mock me so?
Rob. O my dear father! hither am I come,

Not like a threatening storm to increase your wrack,
For I would take all sorrows from your back,
To lay them all on my own.
Fos. Rise, mischief! rise; away, and get thee gone!
Rob. O, if I be thus hateful to your eye,
I will depart, and wish I soon may die;
Yet let your blessing, sir! but fall on me.
Fos. My heart still hates thee.
Wife. Sweet husband!
Fos. Get you both gone!
That misery takes some rest that dwells alone.
Away, thou villain!
Rob. Heaven can tell;
Ache but your finger, I to make it well
Would cut my hand off.
Fos. Hang thee! hang thee!
Wife. Husband!
Fos. Destruction meet thee! Turn the key there, ho!
Rob. Good sir! I'm gone, I will not stay to grieve you.
O, knew you, for your woes what pains I feel,
You would not scorn me so. See sir! to cool
Your heat of burning sorrow, I have got
Two hundred pounds, and glad it is my lot
To lay it down with reverence at your feet;
No comfort in the world to me is sweet,
Whilst thus you live in moan.
Fos. Stay!
Rob. Good truth, sir! I'll have none of it back,
Could but one penny of it save my life.
Wife. Yet stay, and hear him! O, unnatural strife
In a hard father's bosom!
Fos. I see mine error now: O, can there grow
A rose upon a bramble? did there e'er flow
Poison and health together in one tide?
I'm born a man: reason may step aside,
And lead a father's love out of the way:

Forgive me, my good boy! I went astray;
Look! on my knees I beg it: not for joy,
Thou bring'st this golden rubbish, which I spurn:
But glad in this, the heavens mine eye-balls turn,
And fix them right to look upon that face,
Where love remains with pity, duty, grace.
O, my dear wronged boy!

Rob. Gladness o'erwhelms
My heart with joy: I can not speak.

Wife. Crosses of this foolish world
Did never grieve my heart with torments more
Than it is now grown light
With joy and comfort of this happy sight.

THOMAS HEYWOOD.

1570?—1649-50.

A CHALLENGE FOR BEAUTY.

PETROCELLA, *a fair Spanish lady, loves* MONTFERRERS, *an English sea captain, who is captive to* VALLADAURA, *a noble Spaniard.*—VALLADAURA *loves the lady; and employs* MONTFERRERS *to be the messenger of his love to her.*

PETROCELLA. MONTFERRERS.

Pet. What art thou in thy country?

Mont. There, a man.

Pet. What here?

Mont. No better than you see; a slave.

Pet. Whose?

Mont. His that hath redeem'd me.

Pet. Valladaura's?

Mont. Yes, I proclaim't; I that was once mine own,
Am now become his creature.

Pet. I perceive,
Your coming is to make me think you noble,
Would you persuade me deem your friend a god:
For only such make men. Are you a gentleman?

Mont. Not here; for I am all dejectedness,

Captive to fortune, and a slave to want;
I can not call these clothes I wear mine own;
I do not eat but at another's cost;
This air I breathe is borrow'd; ne'er was man
So poor and abject. I have not so much
In all this universe as a thing to leave,
Or a country I can freely boast is mine.
My essence and my being is another's.
What should I say? I am not anything;
And I possess as little.

Pet. Tell me that?
Come, come, I know you to be no such man.
You are a soldier valiant and renown'd;
Your carriage tried by land, and proved at sea;
Of which I have heard such full expression,
No contradiction can persuade me less;
And in this faith I am constant.

Mont. A mere worm,
Trod on by every fate!

Pet. Raised by your merit
To be a common argument through Spain,
And speech at princes' tables, for your worth,—
Your presence when you please to expose't abroad
Attracts all eyes, and draws them after you;
And those that understand you, call their friends,
And pointing through the street say, This is he,
This is that brave and noble Englishman,
Whom soldiers strive to make their precedent,
And other men their wonder.

Mont. This your scorn
Makes me appear more abject to myself,
Than all diseases I have tasted yet
Had power to asperse upon me; and yet, lady!
I could say something, durst I.

Pet. Speak't at once.

Mont. And yet——

Pet. Nay, but we'll admit no pause.
Mont. I know not how my phrase may relish you,
And loath I were to offend; even in what's past
I must confess I was too bold. Farewell!
I shall no more distaste you.
Pet. Sir! you do not;
I do proclaim you do not. Stay, I charge you!
Or, as you say you have been fortune's scorn,
So ever prove to woman.
Mont. You charge deeply,
And yet now I bethink me——
Pet. As you are a soldier,
An Englishman, have hope to be redeem'd
From this your scorned bondage you sustain,
Have comfort in your mother and fair sister,
Renown so blazed in the ears of Spain,
Hope to rebreathe that air you tasted first,
So tell me——
Mont. What?
Pet. Your apprehension catch'd,
And almost was in sheaf——
Mont. Lady! I shall.
Pet. And in a word!
Mont. I will.
Pet. Pronounce it then!
Mont. I love you.
Pet. Ha! ha! ha!
Mont. Still it is my misery
Thus to be mock'd in all things.
Pet. Pretty, faith.
Mont. I look'd thus to be laugh'd at; my estate
And fortunes, I confess, deserve no less;
That made me so unwilling to denounce
Mine own derisions; but alas! I find
No nation, sex, complexion, birth, degree,
But jest at want, and mock at misery.

Love me?

nt. I do, I do; and maugre fate,
And spite of all sinister evil, shall.
And now I charge you, by that filial zeal
You owe your father, by the memory
Of your dear mother, by the joys you hope
In blessed marriage, by the fortunate issue
Stored in your womb, by these and all things else
That you can style with goodness, instantly,
Without evasion, trick, or circumstance,
Nay! least premeditation, answer me,—
Affect you me, or no?

Pet. How speak you that?

Mont. Without demur or pause!

Pet. Give me but time
To sleep upon't!

Mont. I pardon you no minute; not so much,
As to apparel the least phrase you speak.
Speak in the shortest sentence!

Pet. You have vanquish'd me,
At mine own weapon: noble sir! I love you:
And what my heart durst never tell my tongue,
Lest it should blab my thoughts, at last I speak,
And iterate; I love you.

Mont. O, my happiness!
What, wilt thou feel me still? art thou not weary
Of making me thy May-game, to possess me
Of such a treasure's mighty magazine,
Not suffer me to enjoy it; ta'en with this hand,
With that to give't another?

Pet. You are sad, sir!
Be so no more! if you have been dejected,
It lies in me to mount you to that height
You could not aim at greater. I am yours.
These lips, that only witness it in air,
Now with this truth confirm it.

Kisses him.

Mont. I was born to't;
And it shall out at once.
Pet. Sir! you seem passionate;
As if my answer pleased not.
Mont. Now my death!
For mine own tongue must kill me: noble lady!
You have endear'd me to you, but my vow
Was, ne'er to match with any, of what state
Or birth soever, till before the contract
Some one thing I impose her.
Pet. She to do it?
Mont. Or, if she fail me in my first demand,
I to abjure her ever.
Pet. I am she,
That beg to be employ'd so: name a danger,
Whose very face would fright all womanhood,
And manhood put in trance, nay! whose aspect
Would ague such as should but hear it told;
But to the sad beholder prove like those
That gazed upon Medusa's snaky locks,
And turn'd them into marble: these and more,
Should you but speak't, I'd do.
Mont. And swear to this?
Pet. I vow it by my honour, my best hopes,
And all that I wish gracious: name it then!
For I am in a longing in my soul,
To show my love's expression.
Mont. You shall then——
Pet. I'll do it, as I am a virgin:
Lie it within mortality, I'll do it.
Mont. You shall——
Pet. I will: that which appears in you
So terrible to speak, I'll joy to act;
And take pride in performance.
Mont. Then you shall——
Pet. What? soldier! what?

Mont. ——love noble Valladaura
And at his soonest appointment marry him.
Pet. Then I am lost.——

THE ENGLISH TRAVELER.

Young GERALDINE *comes home from his travels, and finds his playfellow, that should have been his wife, married to old* WINCOTT. *The old gentleman receives him hospitably as a friend of his father's; takes delight to hear him tell of his travels, and treats him in all respects like a second father; his house being always open to him. Young* GERALDINE *and the* WIFE *agree not to wrong the old gentleman.*

WIFE. GERALDINE.

Ger. We now are left alone.
Wife. Why, say we be; who should be jealous of us?
This is not first of many hundred nights,
That we two have been private, from the first
Of our acquaintance; when our tongues but clipt
Our mother's tongue, and could not speak it plain,
We knew each other: as in stature, so
Increased our sweet society. Since your travel,
And my late marriage, through my husband's love,
Midnight has been as mid-day, and my bedchamber
As free to you, as your own father's house,
And you as welcome to it.
Ger. I must confess
It is in you your noble courtesy:
In him a more than common confidence,
And, in his age, can scarce find precedent.
Wife. Most true! it is withal an argument,
That both our virtues are so deep impress'd
In his good thoughts, he knows we can not err.
Ger. A villain were he, to deceive such trust,
Or (were there one) a much worse character!
Wife. And she no less, whom either beauty, youth,
Time, place, or opportunity could tempt
To injure such a husband!

Ger. You deserve,
Even for his sake, to be for ever young;
And he, for yours, to have his youth renew'd:
So mutual is your true conjugal love.
Yet had the fates so pleased——
Wife. I know your meaning.
It was once voiced, that we two should have match'd;
The world so thought and many tongues so spake;
But Heaven hath now disposed us other ways:
And being as it is (a thing in me
Which I protest was never wish'd nor sought)
Now done, I not repent it.
Ger. In those times
Of all the treasures of my hopes and love
You were the exchequer, they were stored in you;
And had not my unfortunate travel cross'd them,
They had been here reserved still.
Wife. Troth they had,
I should have been your trusty treasurer.
Ger. However, let us love still, I entreat;
That neighbourhood and breeding will allow;
So much the laws divine and human both
'Twixt brother and a sister will approve:
Heaven then forbid that they should limit us
Wish well to one another!
Wife. If they should not,
We might proclaim they were not charitable,
Which were a deadly sin but to conceive.
Ger. Will you resolve me one thing?
Wife. As to one,
That in my bosom hath a second place,
Next my dear husband.
Ger. That's the thing I crave,
And only that; to have a place next him.
Wife. Presume on that already, but perhaps
You mean to stretch it further.

Ger. Only thus far:
Your husband's old, to whom my soul does wish
A Nestor's age, so much he merits from me;
Yet if (as proof and nature daily teach,
Men can not always live, especially
Such as are old and crazed;) he be call'd hence,
Fairly, in full maturity of time,
And we two be reserved to after life;
Will you confer your widowhood on me?
Wife. You ask the thing I was about to beg;
Your tongue hath spoke mine own thoughts.
Ger. 'Tis enough, that word
Alone instates me happy: now, so please you,
We will divide; you to your private chamber,
I to find out my friend.
Wife. You are now my brother;
But then, my second husband. *They part.*

JOHN FLETCHER.

1579—1625.

THIERRY AND THEODORET.

THIERRY, *King of France, being childless, is foretold by an Astrologer that he shall have children if he sacrifice the first woman he shall meet at sunrise coming from the Temple of Diana. In conversation with* MARTEL, *one of his nobles, he waits before the Temple; and the first woman he sees proves to be his wife* ORDELLA.

Martel. Your Grace is early stirring.
Thierry. How can he sleep
Whose happiness is laid up in an hour
He knows comes stealing towards him? O, Martel!
Is it possible the longing bride, whose wishes
Out-run her fears, can on that day she is married
Consume in slumbers; or his arms rust in ease,
That hears the charge, and sees the honour'd purchase
Ready to gild his valour? Mine is more,

A power above these passions; this day France,
France, that in want of issue withers with us,
And like an aged river, runs his head
Into forgotten ways, again I ransom,
And his fair course turn right. . .

Mart. Happy woman, that dies to do these things!

Thier. The gods have heard me now, and those that scorn'd me,
Mothers of many children and blest fathers
That see their issue like the stars unnumber'd,
Their comforts more than them, shall in my praises
Now teach their infants songs; and tell their ages
From such a son of mine, or such a queen,
That chaste Ordella brings me. . .

Mart. The day wears,
And those that have been offering early prayers,
Are now returning homeward.

Thier. Stand and mark then!

Mart. Is it the first must suffer?

Thier. The first woman.

Mart. What hand shall do it? sir!

Thier. This hand, Martel!
For who less dare presume to give the Gods
An incense of this offering?

Mart. Would I were she,
For such a way to die, and such a blessing,
Can never crown my parting. . .
Here comes a woman!

ORDELLA *comes out from the Temple, veiled.*

Thier. Stand and behold her then!

Mart. I think a fair one.

Thier. Move not whilst I prepare her! may her peace,
Like his whose innocence the Gods are pleased with,
And offering at their altars gives his soul
Far purer than those fires, pull heaven upon her!
You holy powers! no human spot dwell in her;
No love of anything, but you and goodness,

Tie her to earth; fear be a stranger to her,
And all weak blood's affections, but thy hope,
Let her bequeathe to women. Hear me, Heaven!
Give her a spirit masculine and noble,
Fit for yourselves to ask, and me to offer.
O, let her meet my blow, doat on her death;
And as a wanton vine bows to the pruner,
That by his cutting off more may increase,
So let her fall to raise me fruit! Hail, woman!
The happiest and the best (if thy dull will
Do not abuse thy fortune) France e'er found yet.

Ordel. She's more than dull, sir! less and worse than woman,
That may inherit such an infinite
As you propound, a greatness so near goodness,
And brings a will to rob her.

Thier. Tell me this then!
Was there e'er woman yet, or may be found,
That for fair fame, unspotted memory,
For virtue's sake, and only for its self sake,
Has, or dare make a story?

Ordel. Many dead, sir! living I think as many.

Thier. Say the kingdom
May from a woman's will receive a blessing,
The king and kingdom, not a private safety;
A general blessing, lady!

Ordel. A general curse light on her heart denies it!

Thier. Full of honour;
And such examples as the former ages
Were but dim shadows of and empty figures.

Ordel. You strangely stir me, sir! and were my weakness
In any other flesh but modest woman's,
You should not ask more questions; may I do it?

Thier. You may, and which is more, you must.

Ordel. I joy in it,
Above a moderate gladness; sir! you promise
It shall be honest.

Thier. As ever Time discover'd.
Ordel. Let it be what it may then, what it dare,
I have a mind will hazard it.
Thier. But hark ye!
What may that woman merit, makes this blessing?
Ordel. Only her duty, sir!
Thier. 'Tis terrible!
Ordel. 'Tis so much the more noble.
Thier. 'Tis full of fearful shadows.
Ordel. So is sleep, sir!
Or any thing that's merely ours and mortal;
We were begotten Gods else; but those fears,
Feeling but once the fires of nobler thoughts,
Fly, like the shapes of clouds we form, to nothing.
Thier. Suppose it death!
Ordel. I do.
Thier. And endless parting
With all we can call ours, with all our sweetness,
With youth, strength, pleasure, people, time, nay, reason:
For in the silent grave, no conversation,
No joyful tread of friends, no voice of lovers,
No careful father's counsel, nothing's heard,
Nor nothing is, but all oblivion,
Dust and an endless darkness: and dare you, woman!
Desire this place?
Ordel. 'Tis of all sleeps the sweetest;
Children begin it to us, strong men seek it,
And kings from height of all their painted glories
Fall like spent exhalations to this centre:
And those are fools that fear it, or imagine,
A few unhandsome pleasures, or life's profits,
Can recompense this place; and mad that stay it,
Till age blow out their lights, or rotten humours
Bring them dispersed to the earth.
Thier. Then you can suffer?
Ordel. As willingly as say it.

Thier. Martel! a wonder!
Here is a woman that dares die. Yet tell me!
Are you a wife?
Ordel. I am, sir!
Thier. And have children? She sighs and weeps.
Ordel. O, none, sir!
Thier. Dare you venture,
For a poor barren praise you ne'er shall hear,
To part with these sweet hopes?
Ordel. With all but Heaven,
And yet die full of children; he that reads me
When I am ashes, is my son in wishes;
And those chaste dames that keep my memory,
Singing my yearly requiems, are my daughters.
Thier. Then there is nothing wanting but my knowledge,
And what I must do, lady!
Ordel. You are the king, sir!
And what you do I'll suffer, and that blessing
That you desire, the Gods shower on the kingdom.
Thier. Thus much before I strike then, for I must kill you;
The Gods have will'd it so, thou art made the blessing
Must make France young again, and me a man.
Keep up your strength still nobly!
Ordel. Fear me not!
Thier. And meet death like a measure!
Ordel. I am steadfast.
Thier. Thou shalt be sainted, woman! and thy tomb
Cut out in crystal pure and good as thou art;
And on it shall be graven every age
Succeeding peers of France that rise by thy fall,
Till thou liest there like old and fruitful Nature.
Darest thou behold thy happiness?
Ordel. I dare, sir!

She raises her veil. He lets fall his sword.

Thier. Ha!
Mart. O, sir! you must not do it.

Thier. No! I dare not.
There is an angel keeps that paradise,
A fiery angel, friend! O virtue, virtue,
Ever and endless virtue!
Ordel. Strike, sir! strike!
And if in my poor death fair France may merit,
Give me a thousand blows, be killing me
A thousand days!
Thier. First let the earth be barren,
And man no more remember'd! Rise, Ordella!
The nearest to thy Maker, and the purest
That ever dull flesh show'd us—O, my heart-strings!

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS.

The GOD *of the* RIVER *rises with* AMORET *in his arms, whom the* SULLEN SHEPHERD *has flung wounded into his spring.*

River God. What powerful charms my streams do bring
Back again unto their spring,
With such force, that I their God,
Three times striking with my rod,
Could not keep them in their ranks?
My fishes shoot into the banks;
There's not one that stays and feeds;
All have hid them in the weeds.
Here's a mortal almost dead
Fallen into my river-head,
Hallow'd so with many a spell,
That till now none ever fell!
'Tis a female young and clear,
Cast in by some ravisher!
See upon her breast a wound,
On which there is no plaster bound!
Yet she's warm, her pulses beat;
'Tis a sign of life and heat.
If thou beest a virgin pure,
I can give a present cure.

Take a drop into thy wound
From my watery locks, more round
Than orient pearl, and far more pure
Than unchaste flesh may endure!
See! she pants, and from her flesh
The warm blood gusheth out afresh.
She is an unpolluted maid;
I must have this bleeding stay'd.
From my banks I pluck this flower
With holy hand, whose virtuous power
Is at once to heal and draw.
The blood returns. I never saw
A fairer mortal. Now doth break
Her deadly slumber. Virgin! speak!

Amo. Who hath restored my sense, given me new breath,
And brought me back out of the arms of death?

River God. I have heal'd thy wounds.

Amo. Ay me!

River God. Fear not him that succour'd thee.
I am this fountain's God; below
My waters to a river grow,
And 'twixt two banks with osiers set
That only prosper in the wet
Through the meadows do they glide,
Wheeling still on every side,
Sometimes winding round about,
To find the evenest channel out;
And if thou wilt go with me,
Leaving mortal company,
In the cool streams shalt thou lie,
Free from harm as well as I.
I will give thee for thy food,
No fish that useth in the mud,
But trout and pike that love to swim
Where the gravel from the brim
Through the pure streams may be seen.

Orient pearl, fit for a queen,
Will I give thy love to win,
And a shell to keep them in;
Not a fish in all my brook
That shall disobey thy look,
But when thou wilt, come sliding by,
And from thy white hand take a fly;
And to make thee understand,
How I can my waves command,
They shall bubble whilst I sing
Sweeter than the silver spring.

He sings.

Do not fear to put thy feet
Naked in the river, Sweet!
Think not leach, or newt, or toad,
Will bite thy foot, when thou hast trod;
Nor let the water rising high,
As thou wadest in, make thee cry
And sob, but ever live with me,
And not a wave shall trouble thee!

Amo. Immortal power! that rulest this holy flood,
I know myself unworthy to be woo'd
By thee, a God: for ere this, but for thee,
I should have shown my weak mortality.
Besides, by holy oath betwixt us twain,
I am betroth'd unto a shepherd swain,
Whose comely face, I know, the Gods above
May make me leave to see, but not to love.

River God, May he prove to thee as true!—
Fairest virgin! now adieu;
I must make my waters fly,
Lest they leave their channels dry,
And beasts that come unto the spring
Miss their morning's watering:
Which I would not, for of late
All the neighbour people sate
On my banks, and from the fold

Two white lambs of three weeks old
Offer'd to my deity:
For which this year they shall be free
From raging floods, that as they pass
Leave their gravel in the grass:
Nor shall their meads be overflown,
When their grass is newly mown.

Amo. For thy kindness to me shown,
Never from thy banks be blown
Any tree, with windy force,
Cross thy streams to stop thy course!
May no beast that comes to drink,
With his horns cast down thy brink!
May none that for thy fish do look,
Cut thy banks to dam thy brook!
Barefoot may no neighbour wade
In thy cool streams, wife nor maid,
When the spawn on stones do lie,
To wash their hemp, and spoil the fry!

River God. Thanks, virgin! I must down again;
Thy wound will put thee to no pain:
Wonder not so soon 'tis gone;
A holy hand was laid upon.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT, 1585-6—1613-16.

PHILASTER.

PHILASTER, *in love with the* PRINCESS ARETHUSA, *has a Page called* BELLARIO, *a woman disguised as a boy.* PHILASTER *tells the Princess of the boy, and how he was met with.*

I have a boy sent by the Gods,
Not yet seen in the Court. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain's side,
Of which he borrow'd some to quench his thirst,

[illegible]

[illegible] boy!

[illegible] my sake.

[illegible] ay! or deserve.

[illegible] was nothing,

[illegible] being yours:

[illegible] and that which you are apt

[illegible] in me.

[illegible] the running of a boy

[illegible] ventured you

To part my miseries and me; for which,
I never can expect to serve a lady
That bears more honour in her breast than you.
Phi. But, boy! it will prefer thee; thou art young,
And bear'st a childish overflowing love
To them that clap thy cheeks and speak thee fair yet.
But when thy judgment comes to rule those passions,
Thou wilt remember best those careful friends
That place thee in the noblest way of life.
She is a princess I prefer thee to.
Bell. In that small time that I have seen the world,
I never knew a man hasty to part
With a servant he thought trusty; I remember,
My father would prefer the boys he kept
To greater men than he, but did it not
Till they were grown too saucy for himself.
Phi. Why, gentle boy! I find no fault at all
In thy behaviour.
Bell. Sir! if I have made
A fault of ignorance, instruct my youth;
I shall be willing, if not apt, to learn,
Age and experience will adorn my mind
With larger knowledge; and if I have done
A wilful fault, think me not past all hope
For once; what master holds so strict a hand
Over his boy, that he will part with him
Without one warning? Let me be corrected
To break my stubbornness, if it be so,
Rather than turn me off, and I shall mend.
Phi. Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay,
That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
Alas! I do not turn thee off; thou knowest
It is my business that doth call thee hence,
And when thou art with her thou dwell'st with me:
Think so, and 'tis so; and when time is full,
That thou hast well discharged this heavy trust,

Laid on so weak a one, I will again
With joy receive thee; as I live, I will.
Nay, weep not, gentle boy! 'tis more than time
Thou didst attend the princess.

Bell. I am gone.
But since I am to part with you, my lord!
And none knows whether I shall live to do
More service for you, take this little prayer:
Heaven bless your loves, your fights, all your designs!
May sick men, if they have your wish, be well!
And Heaven hate those you curse, though I be one!

BELLARIO *describes to the* PRINCESS ARETHUSA *the manner of* PHILASTER'S *love for her.*

Are. Sir! you are sad to change your service, is't not so?

Bell. Madam! I have not changed: I wait on you,
To do him service.

Are. Thou disclaim'st in me;
Tell me thy name!

Bell. Bellario.

Are. Thou canst sing and play?

Bell. If grief will give me leave, madam! I can.

Are. Alas! what kind of grief can thy years know?
Hadst thou a curst master when thou went'st to school?
Thou art not capable of other grief;
Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be,
When no breath troubles them: believe me, boy!
Care seeks out wrinkled brows, and hollow eyes,
And builds himself caves to abide in them.
Come, sir! tell me truly, does your lord love me?

Bell. Love, madam! I know not what it is.

Are. Canst thou know grief, and never yet knew'st love?
Thou art deceived, boy! Does he speak of me
As if he wish'd me well?

Bell. If it be love,
To forget all respect of his own friends,
In thinking of your face; if it be love,

To sit cross-arm'd and sigh away the day,
Mingled with starts, crying your name as loud
And hastily, as men in the streets do fire;
If it be love to weep himself away,
When he but hears of any lady dead,
Or kill'd, because it might have been your chance;
If when he goes to rest (which will not be)
'Twixt every prayer he says to name you once,
As others drop a bead, be to be in love;
Then, madam! I dare swear he loves you.

Are. O you are a cunning boy, and taught to lie
For your lord's credit; but thou know'st a lie
That bears this sound is welcomer to me
Than any truth that says he loves me not.

Discovered to be a woman, BELLARIO *confesses the motive for her disguise to have been her love for* PRINCE PHILASTER.

My father would oft speak
Your worth and virtue and, as I did grow
More and more apprehensive, I did thirst
To see the man so praised, but yet all this
Was but a maiden longing, to be lost
As soon as found, till sitting in my window,
Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a God,
I thought, (but it was you) enter our gates;
My blood flew out, and back again as fast
As I had puff'd it forth, and suck'd it in
Like breath; then was I call'd away in haste
To entertain you. Never was a man
Heaved from a sheepcot to a sceptre, raised
So high in thoughts as I; you left a kiss
Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep
From you for ever; I did hear you talk
Far above singing; after you were gone,
I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
What stirr'd it so. Alas! I found it love,
Yet far from lust, for could I have but lived,

In presence of you, I had had my end.
For this I did delude my noble father
With a feign'd pilgrimage, and dress'd myself
In habit of a boy, and, for I knew
My birth no match for you, I was past hope
Of having you. And, understanding well
That when I made discovery of my sex,
I could not stay with you, I made a vow,
By all the most religious things a maid
Could call together, never to be known,
Whilst there was hope to hide me from men's eyes,
For other than I seem'd; that I might ever
Abide with you: then sate I by the fount
Where first you took me up.

JOHN FORD.

1586—1640.

LOVE'S SACRIFICE.

BIANCHA, *Wife to* CARAFFA, *Duke of Pavia, loves and is loved by* FERNANDO, *the Duke's favourite. She long resists his importunate suit; at length, she enters the room where he is sleeping, and awakens him, to hear her confession of her love for him.*

BIANCHA. FERNANDO, *sleeping.*

Bian. Resolve, and do; 'tis done. What, are those eyes,
Which lately were so over-drown'd in tears,
So easy to take rest? O happy man!
How sweetly sleep hath seal'd up sorrows here!
But I will call him: what, my lord! my lord!
My lord Fernando——
Fer. Who calls?
Bian. My lord!
Sleeping, or waking?
Fer. Ha! who is't?
Bian. 'Tis I:

Have you forgot my voice? or is your ear
But useful to your eye?
Fer. Madam the duchess!
Bian. She, 'tis she; sit up!
Sit up and wonder, whiles my sorrows swell:
The nights are short, and I have much to say.
Fer. Is't possible 'tis you?
Bian. 'Tis possible:
Why do you think I come?
Fer. Why? to crown joys,
And make me master of my best desires.
Bian. 'Tis true, you guess aright; sit up and listen!
With shame and passion now I must confess,
Since first mine eyes beheld you, in my heart
You have been only king. If there can be
A violence in love, then I have felt
That tyranny: be record to my soul
The justice which I for this folly fear!
Fernando! in short words, howe'er my tongue
Did often chide thy love, each word thou spakest
Was music to my ear: was never poor
Poor wretched woman lived, that loved like me;
So truly, so unfeignedly.
Fer. O, madam——
Bian. To witness that I speak is truth, look here!
Thus singly I adventure to thy bed,
And do confess my weakness: if thou tempt'st
My bosom to thy pleasures, I will yield.
Fer. Perpetual happiness!
Bian. Now hear me out!
When first Caraffa, Pavia's duke, my lord,
Saw me, he loved me, and (without respect
Of dower) took me to his bed and bosom,
Advanced me to the titles I possess,
Not moved by counsel, or removed by greatness:
Which to requite, betwixt my soul and heaven

I vow'd a vow to live a constant wife.
I have done so: nor was there in the world
A man created, could have broke that truth,
For all the glories of the earth, but thou,
But thou, Fernando! Do I love thee now?

Fer. Beyond imagination.

Bian. True, I do,
Beyond imagination: if no pledge
Of love can instance what I speak is true,
But loss of my best joys, here, here, Fernando!
Be satisfied and ruin me!

Fer. What do you mean?

Bian. To give my body up to thy embraces;
A pleasure that I never wish'd to thrive in
Before this fatal minute: mark me now!
If thou dost spoil me of this robe of shame,
By my best comforts here, I vow again,
To thee, to heaven, to the world, to time,
Ere yet the morning shall new christen day,
I'll kill myself.

Fer. How, madam! how!

Bian. I will:
Do what thou wilt, 'tis in thy choice; what say ye?

Fer. Pish! do you come to try me? tell me first,
Will you but grant a kiss?

Bian. Yes! take it; that,
Or what thy heart can wish: I am all thine.

Fer. O me——come, come, how many women, pray,
Were ever heard or read of, granted love,
And did as you protest you will?

Bian. (*kneeling*). Fernando!
Jest not at my calamity! I kneel:
By these dishevel'd hairs, these wretched tears,
By all that's good, if what I speak, my heart
Vows not eternally, then think, my lord!
Was never man sued to me I denied;

Think me a common and most cunning wanton,
And let my sins be written on my grave,
My name rest in reproof! Do as you list!
Fer. I must believe ye; yet I hope anon,
When you are parted from me, you will say
I was a good, cold, easy-spirited man,
Nay! laugh at my simplicity: say, will ye?
Bian. No! by the faith I owe my bridal vows:
But ever hold thee much much dearer far
Than all my joys on earth; by this chaste kiss!
Fer. You have prevail'd: and Heaven forbid that I
Should by a wanton appetite profane
This sacred temple! 'Tis enough for me,
You'll please to call me servant.
Bian. Nay, be thine!
Command my power, my bosom, and I'll write
This love within the tables of my heart.
Fer. Enough: I'll master passion, and triumph
In being conquer'd, adding to it this,
In you my love as it begun shall end.
Bian. The latter I new vow——but day comes on:
What now we leave unfinish'd of content,
Each hour shall perfect up. Sweet! let us part.
Fer. Best life! good rest.

PERKIN WARBECK.

PERKIN WARBECK *and his Followers are by* LORD DAWBNEY *presented to* KING HENRY *as Prisoners.*

Dawb. Life to the king, and safety fix his throne!
I here present you, royal sir! a shadow
Of majesty, but in effect a substance
Of pity; a young man, in nothing grown
To ripeness, but the ambition of your mercy:
Perkin; the christian world's strange wonder!
King H. Dawbney!

We observe no wonder; I behold ('tis true)
An ornament of nature, fine, and polish'd,
A handsome youth indeed, but not admire him.
How came he to thy hands?

Dawb. From sanctuary
At Bewley, near Southampton; register'd,
With these few followers, for persons privileged.

King H. I must not thank you, sir! you were to blame
To infringe the liberty of houses sacred:
Dare we be irreligious?

Dawb. Gracious lord!
They voluntarily resign'd themselves,
Without compulsion.

King H. So? 'twas very well;
'Twas very well. Turn now thine eyes,
Young man! upon thyself and thy past actions.
What revels in combustion through our kingdom
A frenzy of aspiring youth hath danced:
Till, wanting breath, thy feet of pride have slipt
To break thy neck!

Warb. But not my heart: my heart
Will mount, till every drop of blood be frozen
By death's perpetual winter. If the sun
Of majesty be darken'd, let the sun
Of life be hid from me, in an eclipse
Lasting, and universal. Sir! remember,
There was a shooting in of light, when Richmond
(Not aiming at the crown) retired, and gladly,
For comfort to the duke of Bretagne's court.
Richard, who sway'd the sceptre, was reputed
A tyrant then; yet then, a dawning glimmer'd
To some few wandering remnants, promising day,
When first they ventured on a frightful shore,
At Milford Haven.

Dawb. Whither speeds his boldness?
Check his rude tongue, great sir!

King H. O, let him range :
The player's on the stage still ; 'tis his part :
He does but act.——What follow'd ?
Warb. Bosworth field :
Where at an instant, to the world's amazement,
A morn to Richmond and a night to Richard
Appear'd at once. The tale is soon applied :
Fate which crown'd these attempts, when least assured,
Might have befriended others, like resolved.
King H. A pretty gallant ! thus your aunt of Burgundy,
Your duchess aunt, inform'd her nephew ; so
The lesson prompted, and well conn'd, was moulded
Into familiar dialogue, oft rehearsed,
Till, learnt by heart, 'tis now received for truth.
Warb. Truth in her pure simplicity wants art
To put a feigned blush on ; scorn wears only
Such fashion, as commends to gazers' eyes
Sad ulcerated novelty, far beneath
The sphere of majesty : in such a court
Wisdom and gravity are proper robes,
By which the sovereign is best distinguish'd
From zanies to his greatness.
King H. Sirrah ! shift
Your antick pageantry, and now appear
In your own nature ; or you'll taste the danger
Of fooling out of season.
Warb. I expect
No less than what severity calls justice,
And politicians safety ; let such beg,
As feed on alms ! but if there can be mercy
In a protested enemy, then may it
Descend to these poor creatures, whose engagements
To the bettering of their fortunes have incurr'd
A loss of all : to them if any charity
Flow from some noble orator, in death
I owe the fee of thankfulness.

King H. So brave?
What a bold knave is this! . . .
We trifle time with follies.
Urswick! command the dukeling, and these fellows,
To Digby the lieutenant of the Tower:
With safety let them be convey'd to London!
It is our pleasure, no uncivil outrage,
Taunts, or abuse, be suffer'd to their persons:
They shall meet fairer law than they deserve.
Time may restore their wits, whom vain ambition
Hath many years distracted.
Warb. Noble thoughts
Meet freedom in captivity. The Tower:
Our childhood's dreadful nursery! . .
King H. Was ever so much impudence in forgery?
The custom sure of being styled a king,
Hath fasten'd in his thought that he is such.

THE BROKEN HEART.

While CALANTHA (*Princess of Sparta*) *is celebrating the nuptials of* PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANEA *at court with music and dancing, one enters to inform her that the King her father is dead; a second that* PENTHEA (*sister to* ITHOCLES) *is starved; and a third that* ITHOCLES *himself* (*to whom the Princess is contracted*) *is cruelly murdered.*

CALANTHA. PROPHILUS. EUPHRANEA. NEARCHUS. CROTOLON. CHRISTALLA. PHILEMA, *and others.*

Cal. We miss our servant Ithocles, and Orgilus;
On whom attend they?
Crot. My son, gracious princess!
Whisper'd some new device, to which these revels
Should be but usher; wherein, I conceive,
Lord Ithocles and he himself are actors.
Cal. A fair excuse for absence; as for Bassanes,
Delights to him are troublesome; Armostes
Is with the king.

Crot. He is.
Cal. On to the dance :

To NEARCHUS.

Cousin, hand you the bride ; the bridegroom be
Entrusted to my courtship : be not jealous,
Euphranea ! I shall scarcely prove a temptress.
Fall to our dance !

They dance the first change, during which ARMOSTES *enters.*

Arm. The king your father's dead.
Cal. To the other change !
Arm. Is it possible ?

They dance again : BASSANES *enters.*

Bass. O madam !
Penthea, poor Penthea's starved.

(PENTHEA *had been unhappily married to him.*)

Cal. Beshrew thee !——
Lead to the next !
Bass. Amazement dulls my senses.

They dance again : ORGILUS *enters.*

Org. Brave Ithocles is murder'd, murder'd cruelly.
Cal. How dull this music sounds ! Strike up more sprightly !
Our footings are not active like our hearts,
Which tread the nimbler measure.
Org. I am thunderstruck.

They dance the last change. The music ceases.

Cal. So, let us breathe awhile ! hath not this motion
Raised fresher colour on our cheeks ?

To NEARCHUS.

Near. Sweet Princess !
A perfect purity of blood enamels
The beauty of your white.
Cal. We all look cheerfully :
And, cousin ! 'tis methinks a rare presumption
In any, who prefer our lawful pleasures

Before their own sour censure, to interrupt
The custom of this ceremony bluntly.

Near. None dares, Lady!

Cal. Yes, yes; some hollow voice deliver'd to me
How that the King was dead.

Arm. The King is dead:
That fatal news was mine; for in mine arms
He breathed his last, and with his crown bequeath'd you
Your mother's wedding ring, which here I tender.

Crot. Most strange!

Cal. Peace crown his ashes! we are Queen then.

Near. Long live Calantha, Sparta's sovereign Queen!

All. Long live the Queen.

Cal. What whisper'd Bassanes?

Bass. That my Penthea, miserable soul,
Was starved to death.

Cal. She's happy; she hath finish'd
A long and painful progress.—A third murmur
Pierced mine unwilling ears.

Org. That Ithocles
Was murder'd. . .

Cal. By whose hand?

Org. By mine: this weapon
Was instrument to my revenge. The reasons

(ITHOCLES *had prevented* PENTHEA *from marrying* ORGILUS, *to whom she was betrothed.*)

Are just and known. Quit him of these, and then
Never lived gentleman of greater merit,
Hope, or abiliment to steer a kingdom. . .

Cal. We begin our reign
With a first act of justice. Thy confession,
Unhappy Orgilus! dooms thee a sentence;
But yet thy father's or thy sister's presence
Shall be excused: give, Crotolon! a blessing
To thy lost son; Euphranea! take a farewell:
And both begone! . .

To ORGILUS.

Bloody relater of thy stains in blood!
For that thou hast reported him (whose fortunes
And life by thee are both at once snatch'd from him)
With honourable mention, make thy choice
Of what death likes thee best! there's all our bounty.
But to excuse delays, let me, dear cousin!
Entreat you and these lords see execution
Instant, before ye part.

Near. Your will commands us.

Org. One suit, just Queen! my last. Vouchsafe your clemency,
That by no common hand I be divided
From this my humble frailty.

Cal. To their wisdoms,
Who are to be spectators of thine end,
I make the reference. Those that are dead,
Are dead; had they not now died, of necessity
They must have paid the debt they owed to nature
One time or other. Use despatch, my lords!—
We'll suddenly prepare our coronation.

Exit.

Arm. 'Tis strange these tragedies should never touch on
Her female pity.

Bass. She has a masculine spirit.

The coronation of CALANTHA *takes place after the execution of* ORGILUS.—*She enters the Temple, dressed in white, having a crown on her head. She kneels at the altar. The dead body of* ITHOCLES (*whom she should have married*) *is borne on a hearse, in rich robes, having a crown on his head; and placed by the side of the altar, where she kneels. Her devotions ended, she rises.*—

CALANTHA. NEARCHUS. PROPHILUS. CROTOLON. BASSANES. ARMOSTES. EUPHRANEA. AMELUS. CHRISTALLA. PHILEMA, *and others.*

Cal. Our orisons are heard, the Gods are merciful.
Now tell me, you, whose loyalties pay tribute
To us your lawful sovereign! how unskilful

Your duties, or obedience is, to render
Subjection to the sceptre of a virgin ;
Who have been ever fortunate in princes
Of masculine and stirring composition.
A woman has enough to govern wisely
Her own demeanours, passions, and divisions.
A nation warlike, and inured to practice
Of policy and labour, can not brook
A feminate authority : we therefore
Command your counsel, how you may advise us
In choosing of a husband, whose abilities
Can better guide this kingdom.

Near. Royal lady!
Your law is in your will.

Arm. We have seen tokens
Of constancy too lately to mistrust it.

Crot. Yet if your Highness settle on a choice
By your own judgment both allow'd and liked of,
Sparta may grow in power and proceed
To an increasing height. . . .

Cal. Cousin of Argos!

Near. Madam!

Cal. Were I presently
To choose you for my lord,—I'll open freely
What articles I would propose to treat on,
Before our marriage.

Near. Name them, virtuous lady!

Cal. I would presume you would retain the royalty
Of Sparta in her own bounds : then in Argos
Armostes might be viceroy ; in Messene
Might Crotolon bear sway ; and Bassanes
Be Sparta's marshal :
The multitudes of high employments could not
But set a peace to private griefs. These gentlemen,
Groneas and Hemophil, with worthy pensions,
Should wait upon your person in your chamber.

I would bestow Christalla on Amelus ;
She'll prove a constant wife : and Philema
Should into Vesta's temple.

Bass. This is a testament ;
It sounds not like conditions on a marriage.

Near. All this should be perform'd.

Cal. Lastly, for Prophilus,
He should be, cousin ! solemnly invested
In all those honours, titles, and preferments,
Which his dear friend and my neglected husband
Too short a time enjoy'd.

Proph. I am unworthy
To live in your remembrance.

Euph. Excellent lady !

Near. Madam ! what means that word, neglected husband ?

Cal. Forgive me ! Now I turn to thee, thou shadow

To the dead body of ITHOCLES.

Of my contracted lord ! Bear witness all,
I put my mother's wedding ring upon
His finger ; 'twas my father's last bequest :
Thus I new marry him, whose wife I am ;
Death shall not separate us. O my lords !
I but deceived your eyes with antick gesture,
When one news straight came huddling on another,
Of death, and death, and death ; still I danced forward ;
But it struck home, and here, and in an instant.
Be such mere women, who with shrieks and outcries
Can vow a present end to all their sorrows ;
Yet live to court new pleasures, and outlive them !
They are the silent griefs which cut the heart-strings :
Let me die smiling !

Near. 'Tis a truth too ominous.

Cal. One kiss on these cold lips ! my last. Crack ! crack !
Argos now's Sparta's king.

Dies.

PHILIP MASSINGER.

1584—1639.

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

SIR GILES OVERREACH, *a wealthy usurer, is described.*

To have a usurer that starves himself
And wears a cloak of one-and-twenty years
On a suit of fourteen groats, bought of the hangman,
To grow rich, and then purchase, is too common ;
But this Sir Giles feeds high, keeps many servants,
Who must at his command do any outrage ;
Rich in his habit, vast in his expenses,—
Yet he to admiration still increases
In wealth and lordships.
He frights men out of their estates,
And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill men,
As they were cobwebs. No man dares reprove him.
Such a spirit to dare and power to do were never
Lodged so unluckily.

OVERREACH *has robbed and ruined his own nephew,* WELLBORN, *a careless good fellow; and out of farther malice employs* MARRALL, *a knavish attorney, his tool and parasite, to persuade* WELLBORN *to some act which shall put him out of the way.* LADY ALLWORTH, *a rich widow, befriends* WELLBORN, *and for his purpose gives him free access to her house, as if he were a favoured suitor. He takes* MARRALL *there to dinner ; and the hoodwinked rascal changes sides at once, and fawns upon his entertainer.* AMBLE, ORDER, *and* FURNACE *are* LADY ALLWORTH'S *servants.* AMBLE, *who has waited at table, enters laughing.*

Amble. Ha, ha ! I shall burst.
Order. Contain thyself, man !
Furn. Or make us partakers of your sudden mirth !
Amble. Ha, ha ! my Lady has got such a guest at her table—this term-driving Marrall, this snip of an attorney.

Furn. What of him?

Amble. The knave thinks still he's at the cook's shop in Ram-alley, where the clerks divide and the elder is to choose; and feeds so slovenly.

Furn. Is that all?

Amble. My Lady drank to him for fashion's sake, or to please Mr. Wellborn. As I live, he rises and takes up a dish, in which there were some remnants of a boil'd capon, and pledges her in white broth.

Furn. Nay! 'tis like the rest of his tribe.

Amble. And when I brought him wine, he leaves his stool and, after a leg or two, most humbly thanks my Worship.

Order. Risen already!

Amble. I shall be chid.

Furn. My Lady frowns.

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, *and* MARRALL.

Lady (*to Amble*). You wait well.
Let me have no more of this! I observed your jeering.
Sirrah! I'll have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table, be he ne'er so mean,
When I am present is not your companion.

Order (*aside*). Nay! she'll preserve what's due to her.

Furn. This refreshing follows your flux of laughter.

Lady (*to Wellborn*). You are master
Of your own will. I know so much of manners
As not to inquire your purposes. In a word,
To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own.

Wellborn (*to Marrall*). Mark that!

Mar. With reverence, sir! and it like your Worship.

Well. Trouble yourself no farther,
Dear Madam! my heart's full of zeal and service,
However in my language I am sparing.
Come, Master Marrall!

Mar. I attend your Worship!

After they have left the house.

Well. I think I am in a good way.
Mar. Good? sir! the best way, the certain best way:
Well. There are casualties
That men are subject to.
Mar. You are above 'em.
And as you are already worshipful,
I hope ere long you will increase in worship,
And be Right Worshipful.
Well. Pr'ythee do not flout me!
What I shall be I shall be. Is't for your ease
You keep your hat off?
Mar. Ease, and it like your Worship.
I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel-nuts, as to be cover'd
When your Worship's present.
Well. (*aside*). Is not this a true rogue,
That out of mere hope of a future cozenage
Can turn thus suddenly! 'tis rank already.
Mar. I know your Worship's wise and needs no counsel,
Yet if, in my desire to do you service,
I humbly offer my advice, but still
Under correction, I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.
Well. No! speak freely!
Mar. Then, in my judgment, sir! my simple judgment,
(Still with your Worship's favour) I could wish you
A better habit: for this can not be
But much distasteful to the noble Lady
(I say no more) that loves you,—for this morning
To me (and I am but a swine to her),
Before the assurance of her wealth perfumed you,
You savour'd not of amber.
Well. Do I now then?

Kisses the end of his cudgel.

Mar. This your batoon hath got a touch of it.
Yet if you please, for change, I have twenty pounds here,
Which out of my true love I'll presently
Lay down at your Worship's feet: 'twill serve to buy you
A riding suit.
Well. But where's the horse?
Mar. My gelding
Is at your service. Nay! you shall ride me
Before your Worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk a-foot. Alas! when you are Lord
Of this Lady's manor (as I know you will be)
You may with the lease of glebe land, call'd Knave's-acre,
A place I would manure, requite your vassal.
Well. I thank thy love; but must make no use of it.
What's twenty pounds?
Mar. 'Tis all that I can make, sir!
Well. Dost thou think, though I want clothes, I could not have 'em
For one word to my Lady?
Mar. As I know not that!
Well. Come, I'll tell thee a secret, and so leave thee.
I'll not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we are married
(There being no woman but is sometimes froward)
To hit me in the teeth and say she was forced
To buy my wedding clothes and took me on
With a plain riding suit and an ambling nag.
No! I'll be furnish'd something like myself.
And so, farewell! For thy suit touching Knave's-acre,
When it is mine 'tis thine.
Mar. I thank your Worship!

WELLBORN *leaves him.*

How was I cozen'd in the calculation
Of this man's fortune! my master cozen'd too,
Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men,—

For that is our profession. Well, well, Mr. Wellborn!
You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be cheated:
Which, if the fates please, when you are possess'd
Of the land and lady, you *sans question* shall be.
I'll presently think of the means.

OVERREACH'S *chief ambition is to buy a title for his daughter. He offers her in marriage to* LORD LOVELL.

Over. To my wish we are private.
I come not to make offer with my daughter
A certain portion; that were poor and trivial:
In one word I pronounce all that is mine,
In lands or leases, ready coin or goods,
With her, my lord! comes to you; nor shall you have
One motive to induce you to believe
I live too long, since every year I'll add
Something unto the heap, which shall be yours too.
Lov. You are a right kind father.
Over. You shall have reason
To think me such. How do you like this seat?
It is well-wooded and well-water'd, the acres
Fertile and rich: would it not serve for change,
To entertain your friends in a summer's progress?
What thinks my noble lord?
Lov. 'Tis a wholesome air,
And well-built pile, and she that is mistress of it
Worthy the large revenue.
Over. She the mistress?
It may be so for a time: but let my lord
Say only that he likes it, and would have it;
I say, ere long 'tis his.
Lov. Impossible!
Over. You do conclude too fast; not knowing me,
Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone
The lady Allworth's lands: but point out any man's
In all the shire, and say they lie convenient

And useful for your lordship; and once more
I say aloud, they are yours.

Lov. I dare not own
What's by unjust and cruel means extorted:
My fame and credit are more dear to me,
Than so to expose them to be censured by
The public voice.

Over. You run, my lord! no hazard:
Your reputation shall stand as fair
In all good men's opinions as now;
Nor can my actions, though condemn'd for ill,
Cast any foul aspersion upon yours.
For though I do contemn report myself,
As a mere sound, I still will be so tender
Of what concerns you in all points of honour,
That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,
Nor your unquestioned integrity,
Shall e'er be sullied with one taint or spot
That may take from your innocence and candour.
All my ambition is to have my daughter
Right honourable; which my lord can make her:
And might I live to dance upon my knee
A young lord Lovell, born by her unto you,
I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.
As for possessions and annual rents,
Equivalent to maintain you in the port
Your noble birth and present state require,
I do remove that burden from your shoulders,
And take it on mine own: for though I ruin
The country to supply your riotous waste,
The scourge of prodigals, want, shall never find you.

Lov. Are you not frighted with the imprecations
And curses of whole families, made wretched
By your sinister practices?

Over. Yes! as rocks are
When foaming billows split themselves against

Their flinty ribs; or as the moon is moved,
When wolves, with hunger pined, howl at her brightness.
I am of a solid temper, and, like these,
Steer on a constant course: with mine own sword,
If call'd into the field, I can make that right,
Which fearful enemies murmur'd at as wrong.
Now, for these other piddling complaints,
Breath'd out in bitterness; as, when they call me
Extortioner, tyrant, cormorant, or intruder
On my poor neighbour's right, or grand encloser
Of what was common to my private use,—
Nay, when my ears are pierced with widows' cries,
And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold;
I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm,
Makes me insensible of remorse or pity,
Or the least sting of conscience.

Lov. I admire
The toughness of your nature.

Over. 'Tis for you,
My lord! and for my daughter, I am marble.

MASSINGER AND DEKKER.

THE VIRGIN MARTYR.

ANGELO, *an angel, attends* DOROTHEA, *as her page.*

Dor. My book and taper.

Ang. Here, most holy Mistress!

Dor. Thy voice sends forth such music, that I never
Was ravish'd with a more celestial sound.
Were every servant in the world like thee,
So full of goodness, angels would come down
To dwell with us: thy name is *Angelo*,

And like that name thou art. Get thee to rest!
Thy youth with too much watching is oppress'd.
Ang. No, my dear lady! I could weary stars,
And force the wakeful moon to lose her eyes,
By my late watching, but to wait on you.
When at your prayers you kneel before the altar,
Methinks I'm singing with some quire in heaven,
So blest I hold me in your company.
Therefore, my most loved Mistress! do not bid
Your boy, so serviceable, to get hence;
For then you break his heart.
Dor. Be nigh me still, then!
In golden letters down I'll set that day,
Which gave thee to me. Little did I hope
To meet such worlds of comfort in thyself,
This little, pretty body, when I, coming
Forth of the temple, heard my beggar-boy,
My sweet-faced, godly beggar-boy, crave alms,
Which with glad hand I gave, with lucky hand;
And when I took thee home, my most chaste bosom
Methought was fill'd with no hot wanton fire,
But with a holy flame, mounting since higher,
On wings of cherubims, than it did before.
Ang. Proud am I that my lady's modest eye
So likes so poor a servant.
Dor. I have offer'd
Handfuls of gold but to behold thy parents.
I would leave kingdoms, were I queen of some,
To dwell with thy good father; for, the son
Bewitching me so deeply with his presence,
He that begot him must do't ten times more.
I pray thee, my sweet boy! show me thy parents;
Be not ashamed!
Ang. I am not: I did never
Know who my mother was; but, by yon palace,
Fill'd with bright heavenly courtiers, I dare assure you,

And pawn these eyes upon it, and this hand,
My Father is in heaven ; and, pretty Mistress,
If your illustrious hour-glass spend his sand
No worse than yet it doth, upon my life,
You and I both shall meet my Father there,
And he shall bid you welcome.
Dor. A bless'd day!

FLETCHER AND MASSINGER.

SIR JOHN VAN OLDEN BARNAVELT.

SIR JOHN VAN OLDEN BARNAVELT *had greatly served his country, Holland; but was neglected when the Prince of Orange came into power. Seeking to overthrow the Prince, he was defeated, and executed as a traitor.*

PROVOST, BARNAVELT, LORDS, GUARDS, EXECUTIONER.

A scaffold put out.

Provost. Clear all, the scaffold!
Let no more into the court! we are choked with people.
Barnavelt. You are courteous in your preparations, gentlemen!
First Lord. You must ascend, sir!
Barn. Fearless I will, my lords!
And what you can inflict as fearless suffer.
Thus high you raise me, a most glorious kindness
For all my cares. For my most faithful service
For you and for the State thus ye promote me!
I thank ye, countrymen! most nobly thank ye.
Pull off my gown! Of what place are ye? friend!
Executioner. Of Utrecht, sir!
Barn. Of Utrecht! Wherefore, prithee,
Art thou appointed here?
Exec. To tell you true, sir!
I won this place at dice: we were three appointed.
Barn. Am I become a general game? a rest

For every slave to pull at? Thank ye still!
You are grown the noblest in your favours, gentlemen!
What's that hangs there? what coffin?
First Lord. How it stirs him!
Second Lord. The body, sir! of Leidenberch, the traitor.

(*One of* BARNAVELT'S *friends.*)

Barn. The traitor?
Second Lord. Ay! the traitor, the foul traitor,
Who, though he kill'd himself to clear his cause,
Justice has found him out and so proclaim'd him.
Barn. Have mercy on his soul! I dare behold him.
First Lord. Believe me, he's much moved.
Second Lord. He has much reason.
Barn. Are these the holy prayers ye prepare for me?
The comforts to a parting soul? Still I thank ye,
Most heartily and lovingly I thank ye.
Will not a single death give satisfaction,
O you most greedy men and most ungrateful!
The quiet sleep of him you gape to swallow,
But you must trim up death in all his terrors
And add to souls departing frights and fevers?
Hang up a hundred coffins! I dare view 'em;
And on their heads subscribe a hundred treasons!
It shakes not me: thus dare I smile upon 'em
And strongly thus outlook your fellest Justice.
Second Lord. Will ye bethink ye, sir! of what ye come for!
Barn. I come to die. Bethink you of your Justice
And with what sword ye strike, the edge of malice!
Bethink ye of the travails I had for ye,
The throes and groans to bring fair peace amongst ye;
Bethink ye of the dangers I have plunged through,
And almost gripes of death, to make you glorious!
Think when the Country, like a wilderness,
Brought nothing forth but desolation,
Fire, sword, and famine,—when the earth sweat under ye,

Cold dews of blood, and Spanish flames hung o'er ye,—
And every man stood mark'd the child of murder,
And women wanted wombs to feed these cruelties,—
Think then who stepp'd in to you, gently took ye
And bound your bleeding wounds up ; from your faces
Wiped off the sweats of sorrow, fed and nursed ye :
Who brought the plough again to crown your plenty;
Your goodly meadows who protected (Countrymen !)
From the arm'd soldiers' furious marches ; who
Unbarr'd the havens, that the floating merchant
Might clap his linen wings up to the winds
And back the raging waves to bring you profit !
Think through whose care you are a Nation
And have a name yet left,—a fruitful Nation
(Would I could say as thankful!) bethink ye of these things,
And then turn back and blush, blush for my ruin !

First Lord. 'Tis strange how this man brags, 'tis a strange impudence,
Not to be pitied in his case, not suffer'd !
You breed the peace ? you bring the plough again ?
You wipe the fire and blood off from this Country,
And you restore her to her former beauty ?
Blush in thine age, bad man ! thy grave blush for thee,
And scorn to hide that man that holds no credit !
Bear witness all the world that knows our troubles
Or ever grieved our plagues, what we have suffer'd
And, under Heaven, by what arms we have cured these !
Counsels and friends, in which I tell thee, Barnavelt !
And through thy impudence I here proclaim it,
Thou hadst the least and last share. 'Tis not your face, sir !
The greatness of your friends, corruptly purchased,
The crying up of your many services,
Which look'd into wither away like mushrooms,
Shall scandal us.

Second Lord. Your Roman end, to make men
Imagine your strong conscience fortified,
No! nor your ground, Religion. Examine all men
Branded with such foul sins as you now die for,
And you shall find their first step still Religion.
Gowrie in Scotland, 'twas his main pretension;
Was not he honest too, his Country's father?
Those fiery spirits next that hatch'd in England
That bloody Powder Plot, and thought like meteors
To have flash'd their Country's peace out in a moment,—
Were not their barrels loaden with Religion?
Were not they pious, just, and zealous subjects?
Humble your soul for shame, and seek not now, sir!
To tumble from that happiness even Angels
Were thrown from for their pride! Confess, and die well!
First Lord. Will ye confess your faults?
Barn. I come not hither
To make myself guilty; yet one fault I must utter,
And 'tis a great one.
Second Lord. The greater mercy.
Barn. I die for saving this unthankful Country.
First Lord. Play not with heaven!
Barn. My game's as sure as yours is,
And with more care and innocence I play it.
Take off my doublet! And I prithee, fellow!
Strike without fear!
Executioner. I warrant I'll fit ye.
I pray forgive me, sir!
Barn. Most heartily!
And here's my hand. I love thee too: thy physic
Will quickly purge me from the world's abuses.
When I speak loudest, strike!
Exec. I shall observe ye.
Barn. Farewell, my lords! to all your counsels fortune,
Happy success, and profit! peace to this Country!
And to you all, that I have bred like children,

Not a more faithful father, but more fortunate!
Do not I stay too long?

Second Lord. Take your own time, sir!

Barn. I have a wife, my lords! and wretched children
Unless it please his Grace to look upon 'em,
And your good honours, with your eyes of favour.
'Twill be a little happiness in my death
That they partake not with their father's ruins.

First Lord. Let not that trouble ye! They shall not find it.

Barn. Commend my last breath to his Excellence!
Tell him the Sun he shot at is now setting,
Setting this night, that he may rise to-morrow,
For ever setting! Now let him reign alone,
And with his rays give life and light to all men!
May he protect with honour, fight with fortune,
And die with general love, an old and good Prince!
My last petition, good Countrymen! forget me:
Your memories wound deeper than your malice:
And I forgive ye all!—A little stay me!
Honour and World! I fling ye thus behind me!
And thus a naked poor man kneel to Heaven.
Be gracious to me, hear me, strengthen me!
I come, I come, O gracious Heaven! now, now,
Now, I present——

Executioner. Is it well done? mine Heeres!

First Lord. Somewhat too much! you have struck his fingers too.
But we forgive your haste. Draw in the body!
And, captains! we discharge your companies.
Make clear the court! Vain glory! thou art gone;
And thus must all built on Ambition.

Second Lord. Farewell, great heart! full low thy strength now lies:
He that would purge Ambition this way dies.

RICHARD BROME.

16. . —1652.

THE ANTIPODES.

In the Antipodes, everything goes contrary to our manners; wives rule their husbands; servants govern their masters; old men go to school again.

SON. SERVANT. GENTLEMAN, *and* LADY, *natives.* ENGLISH TRAVELER.

Servant (*to his young Master*). How well you saw
Your father to school to-day, knowing how apt
He is to play the truant!
Son. But he is not
Yet gone to school.
Servant. Stand by, and you shall see.

Enter three OLD MEN *with satchels.*

All three (*singing*). Domine! domine! duster:
Three knaves in a cluster.
Son. O, this is gallant pastime! Nay! come on.
Is this your school? was that your lesson? ha!
1*st Old Man.* Pray now, good son! indeed, indeed—
Son. Indeed
You shall to school. Away with him; and take
Their wagships with him, the whole cluster of them!
2*d Old Man.* You sha'nt send us now, so you sha'nt.
3*d Old Man.* We be none of your father, so we be'n't.
Son. Away with them! I say; and tell their school-mistress
What truants they are, and bid her pay them soundly!
All three. O! O! O!
Lady. Alas! will nobody beg pardon for
The poor old boys?
English Traveler. Do men of such fair years here go to school?

Gentleman. They would die dunces else.
These were great scholars in their youth; but when
Age grows upon men here, their learning wastes,
And so decays, that if they live until
Threescore, their sons send them to school again;
They'd die as speechless else as new-born children.
English Traveler. 'Tis a wise nation; and the piety
Of the young men most rare and commendable.
Yet give me, as a stranger, leave to beg
Their liberty this day.
Son. 'Tis granted.
Hold up your heads, and thank the gentleman,
Like scholars, with your heels now.
All three. Gratias! gratias! gratias!

Exeunt singing.

JAMES SHIRLEY.

1596—1667.

THE TRAITOR.

LORENZO, *cousin to the* DUKE OF FLORENCE, *is conspiring against him.* DEPAZZI *is* LORENZO'S *creature, but ready to betray him to save himself. The* DUKE *has received letters from Siena, apprising him of* LORENZO'S *treason, and has just shown them to two of his Council,* ANTONIO *and* FLORIO, *when* LORENZO *and* DEPAZZI *enter.*

Alonzo. He is here:
Shall we apprehend him?
Lorenzo. Happy morning to
My gracious Sovereign!
Duke. Good morning, coz!
(*Aside.*) Can treason couch itself within that frame?

Gives LORENZO *the letters.*

We have letters for you.
Lor. Letters! These, dread sir!

Have no direction to me; your Highness
Is only named.

Duke. They will concern your reading.—
Alonzo! now observe and watch him. Florio!
Depazzi! come you hither. Does Lorenzo
Look like a traitor?

Dep. How, sir! a traitor?

Duke. Ay, sir!

Dep. I, sir! by my honour, not I, sir! I defy him
That speaks it. (*Aside.*) I am in a fine pickle.

Lor. I have read.

Duke. Not blush? not tremble? Read again!

Lor. The substance is that you maintain a vigilant eye over Lorenzo, who hath threaten'd, with your death, his Country's liberty; and other things touching reducing of a commonwealth.

Duke (*aside*). I like not that.

Dep. (*aside*). All's out! A plague upon him for a traitor! he has hedged me in; but I'll confess.

Duke. What answer make you to this? Lorenzo!

Lor. This, o' the sudden:
Sir! I must owe the title of a Traitor
To your high favours; envy first conspired,
And malice now accuses. But what story
Mention'd his name that had his prince's bosom
Without the people's hate? 'Tis sin enough
In some men to be great; the throng of stars,
The rout of common people of the sky,
Move still another way than the sun does,
That gilds the creature; take your honours back,
And, if you can, that purple of my veins
Which flows in yours, and you shall leave me in
A state I shall not fear the great ones' envy
Nor common people's rage. And yet, perhaps,
You may be credulous against me.

Duke. Ha!

Alon. The Duke is cool.
Duke. Alonzo! look you prove
Lorenzo what you say!
Alon. I say? my Lord!
I have discover'd all my knowledge, sir!
Dep. Stand to't!
Lor. With license of your Highness, what
Can you imagine I should gain by treason?
Admit I should be impious as to kill you,
I am your nearest kinsman and should forfeit
Both name and future title to the State
By such a hasty bloody disposition.
The rabble hate me now; how shall I then
Expect a safety? Is it reformation
Of Florence they accuse me of, suggesting
I disaffect a monarchy? which how
Vain and ridiculous would appear in me
Your wisdom judge! In you I live and flourish.
What in your death can I expect to equal
The riches I enjoy under your warmth?
Should I for the air and talk of a new government,
A commonwealth, lose all my certainties?
And you above them all, whose favours have
Fallen like the dew upon me? Have I a soul
To think the guilt of such a murder easy
Were there no other torments; or can I
Expect the people will reward your murderer
With anything but death, a parricide?
Alon. (*aside*). So, so, the Duke's already in his circle.
Lor. But I am tame, as if I had no sense,
No other argument to vindicate
My loyalty, thus poison'd by a paper
In my eternal fame, and by a slave.
Call to my brow some one that dare accuse me!
Let him have honour, great as mine, to forfeit;
Or, since your Grace hath taken me so near

Your own height that my scale may not expect
Such a proportion'd adversary, yet let him
Have name within his country, and allow him
A soul 'gainst which I may engage my more
Than equal honour: then I'll praise your justice.
But let him not be one condemn'd already,
A desperate exile! Is it possible
A treason hatch'd in Florence, 'gainst the Duke,
Should have no eyes at home to penetrate
The growing danger; but at Siena one
Must with a perspective discover all?
Ask this good counsellor, or these gentlemen,
Whose faiths are tried, whose cares are always waking
About your person, how have I appear'd
To them, that thus I should be render'd hateful
To you and my good country! They are virtuous,
And dare not blemish a white faith, accuse
My sound heart of dishonour. Sir! you must
Pardon my bold defence: my virtue bleeds
By your much easiness; and I am compell'd
To break all modest limits, and to waken
Your memory (if it be not too late
To say you have one) with the story of
My fair deservings. Who, sir! overthrew
With his designs your late ambitious brother
Hippolito, who like a meteor threaten'd
A black and fatal omen?

Duke. 'Twas Lorenzo!

Lor. Be yet as just, and say whose heart directed
A countermine to check the pregnant hopes
Of Salviati, who for his cardinal's cap
In Rome was potent and here popular?

Duke. None but Lorenzo!

Dep. (*aside*). Admirable traitor!

Lor. Whose service was commended when the exiles,
One of whose tribe accuseth me, had raised

Commotions in our Florence; when the hinge
Of State did faint under the burthen, and
The people sweat with their own fears to think
The soldier should inhabit their calm dwellings?
Who then rose up your safety, and crush'd all
Their plots to air?

Duke. Our cousin, dear Lorenzo!

Lor. When he, that should reward, forgets the men
That purchased his security, 'tis virtue
To boast a merit. With my services
I have not starved your treasury. The grand
Captain Gonzales accounted to King Ferdinand
Three hundred thousand crowns for spies; what bills
Have I brought in for such intelligence?

Dep. (*aside*). I do grow hearty.

Duke. All thy actions
Stand fresh before us, and confirm thou art
Our best and dearest friend. Thus we assure
Our confidence: they love us not that feed
One jealous thought of our dear coz. Lorenzo.
New welcome to us all! For you, Alonzo!
Give o'er your paper kites! learn wit! 'tis time.

He walks aside with LORENZO.

Where shall we meet to-night?

Lor. Pardon me, sir!
I am a dangerous man.

Duke. No more of that!
I'll credit my soul with thee. Shall we revel
This night with Amidea?

Dep. (*aside*). The Duke courts him.
Well, go thy ways, for one of the most excellent,
Impudent traitors——

Duke. Yet a murmuring
Of traitor? We shall sooner suspect him
That thinks Lorenzo guilty.

Dep. I, my Lord!
Dare boldly swear his honour is as free
From any treason as myself.
(*Aside.*) I did prophesy this issue.

THE GENTLEMAN OF VENICE.

GIOVANNI, *of noble extraction, but brought up a gardener, and ignorant of any greater birth, loves* BELLAURA, *a princess; and is beloved again.*

BELLAURA. GIOVANNI.

Bell. How now, Giovanni!
What, with a sword? You were not used to appear
Thus arm'd. Your weapon is a spade, I take it.
Gio. It did become my late profession, madam!
But I am changed——
Bell. Not to a soldier?
Gio. It is a title, madam! will much grace me;
And with the best collection of my thoughts
I have ambition to the wars.
Bell. You have?
Gio. O, 'tis a brave profession, and rewards
All loss we meet with double weight in glory;

. . . . . .

My life
Hath been too useless to myself and country;
'Tis time I should employ it, to deserve
A name within their registry, that bring
The wealth, the harvest, home of well-bought honour.
Bell. Yet I can see
Through all this revolution, Giovanni!
'Tis something else has wrought this violent change.
Pray let me be of counsel with your thoughts,
And know the serious motive; come, be clear!

I am no enemy, and can assist
Where I allow the cause.
Gio. You may be angry,
Madam! and chide it as a saucy pride
In me to name or look at honour; nor
Can I but know what small addition
Is my unskilful arm to aid a country.
Bell. I may therefore justly suspect there is
Something of other force, that moves you to
The wars. Enlarge my knowledge with the secret!
Gio. At this command I open my heart. Madam!
I must confess there is another cause,
Which I dare not in my obedience
Obscure, since you will call it forth; and yet
I know you will laugh at me——
Bell. It would ill
Become my breeding, Giovanni——
Gio. Then,
Know, madam! I am in love.
Bell. In love, with whom?
Gio. With one I dare not name, she is so much
Above my birth and fortunes.
Bell. I commend
Your flight. But does she know it?
Gio. I durst never
Appear with so much boldness to discover
My heart's so great ambition; it is here still
A strange and busy guest.
Bell. And you think absence
May cure this wound——
Gio. Or death——
Bell. I may presume
You think she's fair——
Gio. I dare as soon question your beauty, madam!

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

1775—1864.

INEZ DE CASTRO.

DON PEDRO, *son of the King of Portugal, has married* INEZ DE CASTRO, *in opposition to the wishes of the Queen,* BLANCA, *his stepmother. After long estrangement the father is apparently reconciled to* PEDRO, *and receives his children; but the hate of the Queen pursues* INEZ; *and she would break the marriage.*

Blanca. Don Pedro! I rejoice that our liege lord
Hath well consider'd what becomes his house,
And, in his tenderness of heart, embraced
This lady, to whom on my part I pray
Heaven grant its loving mercies.
Pedro. I await
The presence of my father to pour forth
Whatever gratitude, whatever zeal,
Soldier or son may offer: late last night
His orders came that we await him here.
Blanca. The King my husband met before the castle
The children who (they told him) are his son's;
And he was taken with, I know not which,
The elder, or the younger, and would fain
Have them with him, and talk with them and love them,
And may perhaps in time provide for them.
Pedro. Madam! when they are stronger, their own swords
Will do it.
Inez (*apart*). O, hush! Pedro! is this right
After such kindness?
Blanca. But until they are
Stronger, and carry swords (which may do harm),
Shall we not look to them, and merit thanks?
Pedro. God grant it!
Blanca. All must give up some designs.

Some wishes too long nursed, some ill-grown thoughts.
After five years many would not repine
To yield a mistress; but would bless the eyes
That wink'd upon the fault,—like mine, like his,
The fond indulgent father's, the wise King's.

Pedro. I have no mistress save whom Holy Church
And Love as holy gave me. Gifts like her
Heaven seldom gave, and never man resign'd.

Ines. Surely no longer is there any cause
For separation!

(*They had been forced apart; and he, to save the life of* INEZ, *compelled to marry the* PRINCESS CONSTANTIA, *the Queen's daughter, now dead.*)

Pedro. Cause be there or not,
No power on earth can separate us now.

Blanca. He, who permitted, can release your bonds.
To him belongs all power on earth and heaven.

Pedro. Hath God none left? Have vows and sacraments
No force in them?

Blanca. God leaves this nether world
To his Vice-gerent.

Pedro. So it seems.

Blanca. Then bow,
Obedient to the rod!

Pedro. Is there no time
When rods shall shed their knots, and we arise
From under them; and when the bloody hand
Shall drop them, shall consent to clench our gold
In preference, and be kiss'd on the outside
For form-sake, letting us stand up and walk?

Blanca. I understand not this opprobrious speech.
We are vile worms: how can we stand erect?

Pedro. God made us not vile worms.

Blanca. We make ourselves
None other by our passions.

Pedro. Not by those
The Church hath sanctified.

Blanca. For its own ends.
Pedro. Ay, truly!
Blanca. For its peace.
Pedro. And plenteousness.
Blanca. God's house should be well stored.
Pedro. God's law well kept.
His house be it his to keep; his law be it ours!
Blanca. Assertor of illegibilities
In law! the sense whereof but One can tell,—
No longer do I wonder that my poor
Constantia died so soon: died ere the crown
Circled her fine black hair!
Pedro. And King Alfonso
Was gather'd to his fathers.
Blanca. Miscreant!
Who thought of that?
Pedro. Worthy was your Constantia
Of any crown; but none (had life been spared)
Could have been hers before my father left it.
Blanca. And shall that creature there, that half-espoused,
Wear it instead?
Pedro. That creature there descends
Of royal lineage; and from her hath sprung
A royal lineage not below the past.
Adversity hath nursed it, and just Heaven
Placed it, you say, beneath my father's smile.
Inez. Nothing is wanting now, most gracious Queen!
Beside your blessing.
Blanca. Curses on the brood——
I had well nigh been tempted to exclaim,
Under my wrongs.—But wrongs we all must bear.
Inez. If any of them seem to rise from me,
Punish me, O kind lady! and point out
How I may expiate my offence at last.
Blanca. De Castro! set not thou thy heart upon
The crown! it may fall from thee; nay! it shall.

Inez. For crowns I care not.
Blanca (*to Pedro*). Carèst thou for crowns?
Pedro. I value that of Portugal above
All earthly things, saving my faith and sword.
Blanca. Above this woman?
Pedro. On this woman rests
My faith, and o'er her pillow hangs my sword.
The crown is, and God grant it long may be,
Another's; and no thought can dwell thereon
Of mine, but hopes of love from him who wears it,
A subject's, soldier's, son's obedience.
Blanca. Prove it! the speech was spoken opportunely.
(*A letter is brought in from the* KING: *which she reads.*)
"*She spoils me! what would one much better do?*
Give me my own Mamma! I'll run away——
I'll never have another——Very good ones
Would only make me cry the more for mine."
Patience! I have no patience for his folly.
"*Beauty:*"—Young things are always beautiful.
"*Such innocence:*"—Can they be otherwise?
"*Like me a little:*"—Ha! there lies the spell.
Doating old man! I'll break it if I live.
Like thee?—Constantia's children may become so:
Legitimately born. Them sponsor kings
Have held, and heard their titles at the font.
Pedro. Madam! the former words you spoke less loud:
They may not have concern'd me; but these last
Strike at my honour. Since the nuptial rites
First held together those whom love had join'd
None have been ever holier than were ours.
The Pontiff, to whose power you have appeal'd,
Order'd the best of bishops, him of Guarda,
To join our hands and bless us; which he did,
Shedding the tears that virtuous old men shed
On those whom they think virtuous, both when joy
Showers from above and when grief strikes them low.

Blanca. The Pontiff did it lest a scandal lie
Against the Church. He was deceived. Some doubts
Have risen in his mind, which you shall hear,
Of this young person who was named your wife.
Pedro. Named! by the name of God, she is my wife,
And shall be so for ever. Earth, Hell, Rome,
Shall never separate us—Courage, girl!
Thou hast heard worse from her.
Blanca. And worse shalt hear.
Some time ago, when we first met at Cintra,
I was too tender-hearted; so the King
Assured me: now he leaves me my own way
To follow.
Inez. When he comes——
Blanca. He comes not hither.
Pedro. Can kings deceive?
Blanca. No! they can not deceive;
But they can promise, and observe the promise
Or drop it, as they will. Who shall controul
Or question them?
Pedro. Their God.
Blanca. God hath approved,
From Rome (if you will read it) our resolves.
She offers him a paper.
Pedro. Madam! I read not anything from Rome
That violates our sacraments.
Blanca. Rome made
And can unmake them, and does every day.
Pedro. Only where kings are rich, and nations weak.
Blanca. Some deference must be paid in solid gold,
Some in obedience: the more weighty part
We undertake, the lighter is for you.
Pedro. Rare image, by my troth, is this of Heaven!
Odin and Thor shatter'd the bones and drank
Of beer and mead what the crack'd skull could hold;
Too generous were their mighty hands to filch

The purse, had any purse been in the way.
The Bridge of Mahomet has no shops upon it.
The very Jew eats up his meal morose
Apart from God's, nor robs us in God's name.

Blanca. Who would have thought this cursèd sect should count
Among its friends a Prince of Portugal?

Pedro. There are no sects in subjects: all are one;
One protects all. The world will never flourish
Under crown'd priests or water-sprinkling kings.

Blanca. O horrible! O blasphemy! O lust
Of change in princes! You would fain become,
Though prince, what people call (I think) a patriot:
Hard husky thing with little kernel in it,
And bitter as the water of hell-streams!

Pedro. No, Madam! I abjure the uncleanliness
Of name so prostituted. Prince I am,
And claim my birthright, and wish others theirs.
I am less changeful.—Inez! do not weep!
I want thy word.

Inez. I have no word to speak,
Now every one I utter gives offence.

Pedro. I am then fond of change? Say this against me,
And thou wilt not offend.

Inez. O, may God love me
As does my Pedro! may at length the Queen
Pardon me as God pardon'd me, who made him!

Blanca. Over the grave of my dear child!——Ay, sob!
Hide thy white face! pull thy loose curls around,
Exactly like——I know not what they're like,
They are so frightful, tossing here and there
By their own rustic untamed springiness,
Even when thou movèst neither head nor body.
There's nothing royal, nothing noble in it.
Now I am forced to say what shocks my soul
In utterance,——first because it places thee
Too near our royal house, and then because

It covers it with incest. Can I speak
The words I would? Speak them I must, for these,
These only can strike down thy lofty hopes,
And show thee what abyss, what hell, of guilt
Lies under to engulf thee. Didst thou not
Stand with Don Pedro here and hold the prince
Don Louis with him at the sacrament
Of baptism? By the Saints in Paradise,
Thou art his sister in the Church's eye.

Pedro. The Church had wiped, I fancied, from her eye
This grain of dust; I gave the kerchief for it.
Many, and somewhat worse, she throws in ours.

Blanca. Arguing with him who argues against God,
As thou dost, were a folly. This at least,
Inez! is not among thy many sins;
Yet, little as thou hast deserved of me,
I make thee what amends thy broken marriage
(For such in courtesy I will express it)
Admits of.

Pedro. I am then, it seems, to die:
Since nothing but the stroke of death can break it.

Inez. Sweet husband! shall false dangers overshadow
Whom true and great ones blazed upon and guided?

Pedro. And shall these false ones make thee weep? did those?
Bear up, my Inez! bear up bravely, girl!
We have been happy; happy we shall be.
Thou seest me not withering with age, cast down
By weight of wrongs, consumed by grief, distraught
By envy and ambition, worse than one
Whom penal horses sever limb from limb;
Nor, what were worse than all, bereft of thee:
For Heaven will give me thoughts and views of Inez,
As Inez gave me, in this world, of Heaven.

Blanca. Heaven gives wide views, very wide views to many.
I have my doubts. Rainy-eyed girls see double;
Toss on two pillows, and drop tears on each.

I would say nothing more : I may be wrong ;
But other names than Pedro may have crept
Among the curtains in Don Pedro's house.

Inez. O may they ever ! glorious names ! bless'd Saints
Of Paradise ! have ye not watch'd my sleep ?
Have ye not given me thoughts of him, and hopes,
And visions, when I pray'd you to protect
Him and his children, and that gracious Queen
Who sees me not aright, through love of him,
Wishing him loftier aims and brighter joys.

Blanca. My doubts now darken ; do not think at this
Evasion ?

Pedro. O my Inez ! sure the Blest
Are the more bless'd to share thy love with me,
And I to share it as I do with them.
Alike to me thou art immaculate !

Blanca. How the man raves ! no stain, no spot in her !
Immaculate ! Beware, repeat the word
With those unholy lips, call her that name
Which only One of mortal race had ever !

Pedro. Lady ! that One was meek no less than pure.

Blanca. So am I too, who suffer all this wrong,
This violence, this scoffing, this deceit.
From one like her, false, loathsome, dull, low-born.
Others know all ; I know not half, nor would.

Pedro. Hot lolling tongues bespatter fairest names
With foulest slurs : black shows not upon black.

Blanca. Well, let us hope ! all may be right at last :
There are bad minds, Don Pedro ! in the world,
As you must have observed.

Pedro. A glimpse or two.

Blanca. I did then wisely when I warn'd you both :
Though 'tis a thankless office, as most are
Where we consume our days in doing good.

PEDRO *goes to the window.*

Pedro. Ha! there they stand below, agape for me.
One walk'd but half the length of the house-front
And turn'd again, and ask'd his fellow-slave
(I do believe, for they have hungry scrips)—
"When will the prey be ours, and the prey's price?"
Their plumes and brims ill hide them though they keep
As near as may be under us; perhaps
'Twere well to call three more and better men:
Pacheco is too lank, the shrewd Coelho
And spruce Gonzales would not like their doublets
To have another slash in them.
Blanca. What mean
These foul insinuations?
Pedro. What mean they
Under my window?
Blanca. Your own good, the King's
True service.
Pedro. Let them enter then!
Blanca. This room?
Pedro. Yea! and within one pace of their King's son;
Cover'd; with dirk and rapier; but in front!
Inez. Escape, O dearest Pedro!
Pedro. He who dies
Escapes; and some shall beat the path before.
I would not willingly try any flight;
The only one I know, the only one
Where honour can go with me, will be mine
Whatever hour I choose.
Blanca. Most heathenish!
To talk of Honour and of Death so lightly.
Pedro. Madam! we may lose one, but not the other:
Therefore we need not mind it.
Blanca. Not when Hell
Opens before us?
Pedro. Hell too we may close,
And its enormous portals, with less effort

Than infants push aside ungrateful food.
We have but to maintain our sense of right,
Which of all senses is the pleasantest,
And which must bear most violence ere expell'd.

Blanca. I understand not a fantastic speech
Appliant to no person, to no purport.
I will speak plainer, and I speak to both:
Obey!—It seems not decent that men's hands
Should touch with little gentleness, should lead
Compulsively, young women who have stood
Behind and near the daughter of Castile.
Long-suffering is my merit, if the grace
Of God vouchsafes me one; but oaths of fealty
On all are binding, and on queens the most.
My conscience hath upbraided me severely
For not disclosing to our King the part
Whereto (in tears I own it) I was privy,
Against his crown and dignity.—Come now!
Hear reason, Dona Inez! I no more
Urge any choice which may displease you both.

Pedro. Displease us! urge a choice!

Blanca. We must avoid
Scandal at least. There are formalities:
Mere abjuration now of marriage-rites,
And nothing more than living separate,
One in a cloister, th' other in a camp:
The very choice the brave and chaste all make.

Pedro. Ay, by the Saints! and some perhaps too soon
Shall find my choice made firmly.

Blanca. Now, delay
Were madness, pardon perjury; such threats
Are traitorous and parricidal too.

She calls from the window—

Coelho! Diego! with your band upstairs!
With your whole band! Two timid women wait——

Your Queen commands——your King——your friend the bridegroom——
Force! murder!

To PEDRO.

Stop me? hold me? grasp my wrist?
Audacious! and let that foul fiend escape!

Inez (*just out of the door*). Good soldier! I am not escaping from you.
Push me not back! that was not the command——
Strike! you must act no otherwise——let fall
This halbert, or I run from under it——
The word is given——'twas the Queen gave it. Strike, Irresolute!

Pedro. What fell?

Blanca. Where is she?

Pedro. Fled.

Blanca. Hold me not! pray me not! I will pursue——

Pedro. The guard hath stopp'd her.

Blanca. At the door?

Pedro. With force
More than is manly, thrusting her against it.
Ho, Inez! art thou hurt? Speak! art thou speaking?
What, sobbest thou? my Love! Is then my name
Uncall'd upon in any grief of thine?
Where is she?
Ho! throw open, sentinel!
This door.

Blanca. Stand farther off! he does his duty!—
Farther back yet!—Have you no decency!
To tread upon her blood! it runs through fast,
And will ('tis to be fear'd) leave marks behind.
Who, hearing your insensibility,
Will pity you?

Pedro. None! none!——Inez is dead!
My father! you are childless: fare you well!
(*Aloud to the sentry*) Unbar the door!

(*To Blanca*) Command him, Madam! Who
Shall keep me here while steel is in my grasp,
And vengeance strengthens it and justice guides it?
Blanca. Sentry! unbar!
(*Looking at the corpse*) The scene quite saddens me.
'Twas her own fault, rash child! God's will be done!

THE CORONATION.

FEBE, GRISELDA, ROMOALDA, ARMIDA, FRA PEPE.

Febe. Our good king Ferdinand, although I say it:
He is the bravest king that ever trod
Upon neat's leather, with a star to brisket!
Gris. Death, a dog's death, to whosoe'er denies it!
Febe. He's just like one of us, as kings should be.
Gris. Ay! he has bowels.
Febe. 'Faith! has he: I saw
His Majesty hold up a string of paste
Three palms in length; and down his throat it slid
Just like the sword down that great conjuror's.
Gris. And then he clapp'd his hand on t'other side,
So natural!
Febe. And laugh'd as heartily
As any pickpocket when purse-less wight
Cries Thief! and points him out to some near sbirro,
Who looks all ways but that, and will hear first
What has been lost, and where are witnesses.
Gris. Gnats, rats, and rogues, are bred in every city;
But only ours rears Ferdinands.
Febe. Here comes
Fra Pepe.
Fra Pepe. What now want ye? what hath brought ye
Into this crowd, among these men and horses?
Gris. Father! do shrive us ere we face such perils!
Trumpeters, poets, heroes, harlequins,

And overhead vast tottering catafalques
Choke-full and mountain high: ten thousand arms
Around ten thousand waists, and scarce can save them.
Fra Pepe. I have no time to shrive ye.
Febe. God forbid
That we should urge it! but yon tripe smells bravely,
And we keep many Fridays in the week.
Do not turn this fine Tuesday into one!
Fra Pepe. Knowest thou what tripe is?
Febe. From ancient records
And faint remembrances.
Fra Pepe. Hast tasted it?
Gris. Why should we not, on some rare festival?
Fra Pepe. Luxury will creep downwards, and seize souls.
Who pamper'd you at this enormous rate?
Gris. We are not young ones now, but heretofore
We have had lovers, and have seen carlinos
Spin upon table; and the change was ours.
Fra Pepe. O shame upon ye!
Febe. Shame is call'd upon us
When we are old and needy; they who brought
Shame and old age upon us call it loudest.
Fra Pepe. Thou talkest foolishly indeed, good woman!
Febe. We all talk our best things when teeth are flush.
Gris. Wit is not wanting while the cheek wears roses,
And coral lips are ready to impart it.
Rom. I doubt now whether all this tripe be real.
Arm. They got it cheap, or would not give so largely:
An ounce, two ounces, to one family.
Febe. What! kings mere hucksters? better say they stole it!
Gris. Such glorious ones would scarcely steal the cattle,
Much less what some call offal. Rob poor farmers!
Come, Febe! if we listen to her talk,
We may do penance in a stiller place.
Febe. Never say—Come away! my good Griselda!
While they are forking it from pans and kettles

Wide as the crater, and as piping-hot.
O father Pepe! could you touch, see, smell it!
Bees may make honey-combs: what bee could ever
Make honey-comb like tripe? Ah, fat! ah, pith!
Soft, suctionable, savoury!

Fra Pepe. Out upon thee!

Gris. See there now! Off he goes!

Febe. No fault of mine.

Gris. Yes! thy shrill squally shouts and rubbing down
Of mouth, with one arm first, and then the other,
And then the apron. Who beside thyself
Would talk so touchingly, so near mid-day?
A qualm came over *me;* I felt half-famish'd;
No monk on earth could stand it,—not the best
That ever faced the Devil in the Desert.

Rom. Between you, pretty work! the fratè gone!

Febe. Follow him! who detains you? we want nothing
With you, signora!

Arm. Let those vulgar women
Talk about tripe! we can buy liver, *buy* it;
Drink the half-flask, doze the half-hour, again
Be young,—then shrive us. One night scores not deep.
There's by my reckoning, mother Romoalda!
Only one night between us and to-morrow.

Rom. (*striking her stomach*). The best church-clock lies under this red canvas.
And points, within a trice, to dinner time.

Gris. You totter about sadly, neighbour Febe!

Febe. No wonder! they have thrown so many pulps
And peels of lemon on the ground,—I know
My feet are wet, and my whole stockings with them,—
And plashy daffodils, like artichokes
In size, knee-deep, and palm-leaves long as boats:
So, were there room for falling, fall I must.

Gris. May-hap you tasted a cup's rim at starting?

Febe. Before we met, one little broken one

I sipp'd : they never told me 'twas so strong ;
And then they took advantage of me.
Gris. Men
Always do that with us poor lonely women.
Febe. 'Twas not the wine or men : a fig for them !
This hubbub has confounded me, this crowd ;
Soldiers and monks and mummers fill the street,
And candles bigger than the priests who bear them,
And saucy boys running aside the candles
To catch the drops, leaving one hand for mischief;
And then the bells are making such a coil,
Saint against saint, from Mole to Capo-monte,
We can not hear the loudest voice cry Gara !
If horse or mule tramp muzzling into us.
In vain, Griselda ! lift we up our shoulders
And whisper in God's ear we think it hard.
Gris. Well, Febe ! by stout shoving we are now
Beyond the mob. What ails thee ?
Febe. Many things
Ail me ; vexations, and infirmities ;
Beside a tiny matter of an infant
I dropp'd into the sea through awkwardness.
Gris. Did not the child cry out, as children should ?
Febe. It did. Well, well ! I made an angel of it.
Gris. Then say no more about it !
Febe. 'Tis in heaven,
Among the other angels ; but I fear
That when they say "Sing ! sing, my little one !"
It may give answer—"Five hard fingers here
Have spoil'd my singing."
Gris. They who make an angel
Make more than they who make ten penitents ;
And yet to make one penitent wins heaven.
Febe. I sometimes wish 'twere back again.
Gris. To cry ?
Febe. Ah ! it *does* cry ere the first sea-mew cries ;

It wakes me many mornings, many nights;
And fields of poppies could not quiet it.
Gris. Febe! we must not think of it to-day.
Sorrow is most offensive to the great;
And nobody should grieve when Kings are near.
This, above all days, is a day of joy:
Another King is given to the world,
And our first duty is to guard his throne.
Febe. And drink a little beaker to his health.
We, mother Romoalda! with Christ's help,
Will against all his enemies support him.
O, I am thirsty with the dust! beside
I was so worried by that odious mob:
The people seem to push against me still.

JOHN KEATS.

1795—1821.

KING STEPHEN.

His last battle. The trumpets of the Empress Matilda sounding a victory. Enter GLOUCESTER, KNIGHTS, *and Forces.*

Gloucester. Now may we lift our bruizèd visors up,
And take the flattering freshness of the air,
While the wide din of battle dies away
Into times past, yet to be echoed sure
In the silent pages of our chroniclers.
A Knight. Will Stephen's death be mark'd there, my good lord!
Or that we gave him lodging in yon towers?
Glouc. Fain would I know the great Usurper's fate.

Enter two Captains, severally.

First Captain. My Lord!
Second Captain. Most noble Earl!
First Captain. The King——
Second Captain. The Empress greets——

Glouc. What of the King?
First Captain. He sole and lone maintains
A hopeless bustle 'mid our swarming arms;
And with a noble savageness attacks,
Escapes, makes fiercer onset, then anew
Eludes death, giving death to most that dare
Trespass within the circuit of his sword!
He must by this have fallen. Baldwin is taken;
And for the Duke of Bretagne, like a stag
He flies, for the Welsh beagles to hunt down.
God save the Empress!
Glouc. Now our dreaded Queen:
What message from her Highness?
Second Captain. Royal Maud
From the throng'd towers of Lincoln hath look'd down,
Like Pallas from the walls of Ilion,
And seen her enemies havock'd at her feet.
She greets most noble Gloucester from her heart,
Intreating him, his captains, and brave knights,
To grace a banquet. The high city gates
Are envious which shall see your triumph pass.
The streets are full of music.

Enter another Knight.

Glouc. Whence come you?
Knight. From Stephen, my good Prince! Stephen! Stephen!
Glouc. Why do you make such echoing of his name?
Knight. Because I think, my Lord! he is no man,
But a fierce demon, 'nointed safe from wounds,
And mis-baptizèd with a Christian name.
Glouc. A mighty soldier! Does he still hold out?
Knight. He shames our victory. His valour still
Keeps elbow-room amid our eager swords,
And holds our bladed falchions all aloof.
His gleaming battle-axe, being slaughter-sick,
Smote on the morion of a Flemish knight,

Broke short in his hand ; upon the which he flung
The heft away with such a vengeful force,
It paunch'd the Earl of Chester's horse, who then
Spleen-hearted came in full career at him.

Glouc. Did no one take him at a vantage then ?

Knight. Three then with tiger leap upon him flew,
Whom, with his sword swift-drawn and nimbly held,
He stung away again, and stood to breathe,
Smiling. Anon upon him rush'd once more
A throng of foes, and in this renew'd strife
My sword met his and snapp'd off at the hilt.

Glouc. Come, lead me to this man ! and let us move
In silence, not insulting his sad doom
With clamorous trumpets. To the Empress bear
My salutation as befits the time.

Another part of the Field. Enter STEPHEN *unarmed.*

Stephen. Another sword ! And what if I could seize
One from Bellona's gleaming armoury,
Or choose the fairest of her sheavèd spears ?
Where are my enemies ? Here, close at hand ;
Here come the testy brood. O for a sword !
I'm faint——a biting sword ! a noble sword !
A hedge-stake, or a ponderous stone to hurl
With brawny vengeance, like the labourer Cain !
Come on ! Farewell my kingdom, and all hail
Thou superb, plumed and helmeted renown !
All hail ! I would not truck this brilliant day
To rule in Pylos with a Nestor's beard.

Enter DE KAIMS, *Knights, and Soldiers.*

De Kaims. Is't madness or a hunger after death
That makes thee thus unarm'd throw taunts at us ?
Yield, Stephen ! yield ! or my sword's point dips in
The gloomy current of a traitor's heart.

Stephen. Do it, De Kaims ! I will not budge an inch.

De Kaims. Yes! of thy madness thou shalt take the meed.
Stephen. Darèst thou?
De Kaims. How dare, against a man disarm'd?
Stephen. What weapons has the lion but himself?
Come not near me, De Kaims! for, by the price
Of all the glory I have won this day,
Being a king, I will not yield alive
To any but the second man of the realm,
Robert of Gloucester.
De Kaims. Thou shalt vail to me!
Stephen. Shall I, when I have sworn against it? sir!
Thou think'st it brave to take a breathing king,—
That, on a Court-day bow'd to haughty Maud,
The awèd presence-chamber may be bold
To whisper—There's the man who took alive
Stephen—Me—prisoner. Certes, De Kaims!
The ambition is a noble one.
De Kaims. 'Tis true:
And, Stephen! I must compass it.
Stephen. No! no!
Do not tempt me to throttle you on the gorge,
Or with my gauntlet crush your hollow breast,
Just when your knighthood is grown ripe and full
For lordship!
A Soldier. Is an honest yeoman's spear
Of no use at a need? Take that!
Stephen. Ah, dastard!
De Kaims. What! you are vulnerable? My prisoner!
Stephen. No, not yet! I disclaim it, and demand
Death as a sovereign right unto a king
Who 'sdains to yield to any but his peer,
If not in title, yet in noble deeds,
The Earl of Gloucester. Stab to the hilt, De Kaims!
For I will never by mean hands be led
From this so famous field. Do you hear? be quick!

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

1792—1822.

THE CENCI.

Under fearfullest provocation and in very self-defence against repeated outrage, BEATRICE CENCI (*with her mother* LUCRETIA *and her brother* GIACOMO) *has contrived the death of her father.* MARZIO, *their agent, having under torture confessed, they are brought back into Court and confronted with him.*

The Judge (*to the prisoners*). Look on this man!
When did you see him last?
Beatrice. We never saw him.
Marzio. You know me too well, Lady Beatrice!
Beatrice. I know thee? How? where? when?
Mar. You know 'twas I
Whom you did urge with menaces and bribes
To kill your father. When the thing was done,
You clothed me in a robe of woven gold
And bade me thrive: how I have thriven, you see.
You, my Lord Giacomo, Lady Lucretia!
You know that what I speak is true.

BEATRICE *advances towards him; he covers his face and shrinks back.*

O, dart
The terrible resentment of those eyes
On the dread earth! turn them away from me!
They wound. 'Twas torture forced the truth. My Lords!
Having said this, let me be led to death!
Beatrice. Poor wretch! I pity thee; yet stay awhile!
Camillo. Guards! lead him not away.
Beatrice. Cardinal Camillo!
You have a good repute for gentleness
And wisdom: can it be that you sit here
To countenance a wicked farce like this?

When some obscure and trembling slave is dragg'd
From sufferings which might shake the sternest heart,
And bade to answer, not as he believes,
But as those may suspect or do desire,
Whose questions thence suggest their own reply,—
And that in peril of such hideous torments
As merciful God spares even the damn'd. Speak now
The thing you surely know, which is that you,
If your fine frame were stretch'd upon that wheel,
And you were told—Confess that you did poison
Your little nephew, that fair blue-eyed child
Who was the load-star of your life; and though
All see, since his most swift and piteous death,
That day and night, and heaven and earth, and time,
And all the things hoped for or done therein,
Are changed to you through your exceeding grief,—
Yet would you say—I confess any thing,
And beg from your tormentors, like that slave,
The refuge of dishonourable death.
I pray thee, Cardinal! that thou assert
My innocence.

Camillo (*much moved*). What shall we think? my Lords!
Shame on these tears! I thought the heart was frozen
Which is their fountain. I would pledge my soul
That she is guiltless.

Judge. Yet she must be tortured.

Camillo. I would as soon have tortured mine own nephew
(If he now lived he would be just her age,
His hair too was her colour, and his eyes
Like hers in shape, but blue and not so deep)
As that most perfect image of God's love
That ever sorrowing came upon the earth.
She is as pure as speechless infancy!

Judge. Well, be her purity on your head, my Lord!
If you forbid the rack. His Holiness
Enjoin'd us to pursue this monstrous crime

By the severest forms of law; nay! even
To stretch a point against the criminals.
The prisoners stand accused of parricide,
Upon such evidence as justifies
Torture.

Beatrice. What evidence? this man's?

Judge. Even so.

Beatrice (*to Marzio*). Come near! And who art thou, thus chosen forth
Out of the multitude of living men
To kill the innocent?

Marzio. I am Marzio,
Thy father's vassal.

Beatrice. Fix thine eyes on mine!
Answer to what I ask!
(*Turning to the* JUDGES.)
I prithee mark
His countenance! Unlike bold calumny
Which sometimes dares not speak the thing it looks,
He dares not look the thing he speaks, but bends
His gaze on the blind earth.
(*To* MARZIO.)
What! wilt thou say
That I did murder my own father?

Marzio. O!
Spare me! My brain swims round—I can not speak—
It was that horrid torture forced the truth.
Take me away! let her not look on me!
I am a guilty miserable wretch;
I have said all I know; now let me die!

Beatrice. My Lords! if by my nature I had been
So stern as to have plann'd the crime alleged,
Which your suspicions dictate to this slave,
And the rack makes him utter, do you think
I should have left this two-edged instrument
Of my misdeed,—this man, this bloody knife

With my own name engraven on the heft,
Lying unsheathed amid a world of foes,
For my own death? that with such horrible need
For deepest silence I should have neglected
So trivial a precaution as the making
His tomb the keeper of a secret written
On a thief's memory? What is his poor life?
What are a thousand lives? A parricide
Had trampled them like dust; and see! he lives.
(*Turning to Marzio.*) And thou——
Marzio. O spare me! speak to me no more!
That stern yet piteous look, those solemn tones
Wound worse than torture.
(*To the Judges.*) I have told it all;
For pity's sake lead me away to death!
Camillo. Guards! lead him nearer the Lady Beatrice.
He shrinks from her regard like Autumn's leaf
From the keen breath of the serenest North.
Beatrice. O thou who tremblest on the giddy verge
Of life and death! pause ere thou answerest me!
So mayest thou answer God with less dismay.
What evil have we done thee? I, alas!
Have lived but on this earth a few sad years,
And so my lot was order'd that a father
First turn'd the moments of awakening life
To drops each poisoning youth's sweet hope, and then
Stabb'd with one blow my everlasting soul
And my untainted fame, and even that peace
Which sleeps within the core of the heart's heart;
But the wound was not mortal,—so my hate
Became the only worship I could lift
To our great Father, who in pity and love
Arm'd thee, as thou dost say, to cut him off:—
And thus his wrong becomes my accusation.
And art thou the accuser? If thou hopest
Mercy in heaven, show justice upon earth!

Worse than a bloody hand is a hard heart.
If thou hast done murders, made thy life's path
Over the trampled laws of God and man,
Rush not before thy Judge and say—"My Maker!
I have done this, and more: for there was One
Who was most pure and innocent on earth,
And because she endured what never any
Guilty or innocent endured before,
Because her wrongs could not be told, nor thought,
Because thy hand at length did rescue her,
I with my words kill'd her and all her kin."
Think, I adjure you! what it is to slay
The reverence living in the minds of men
Towards our ancient house and stainless fame!
Think what it is to strangle infant pity
Cradled in the belief of guileless looks,
Till it become a crime to suffer! Think
What 'tis to blot with infamy and blood
All that which shows like innocence, and is,—
Hear me, great God!—I swear, most innocent:
So that the world lose all discrimination
Between the sly, fierce, wild regard of guilt
And that which now compels thee to reply
To what I ask!—Am I, or am I not,
A parricide?

Marzio. Thou art not!

Judge. What is this?

Marzio. I here declare those whom I did accuse
Are innocent. 'Tis I alone am guilty.

Judge. Drag him away to torments! let them be
Subtle and long drawn out, to tear the folds
Of the heart's inmost cell. Unbind him not
Till he confess!

Marzio. Torture me as ye will!
A keener pain has wrung a higher truth
From my last breath. She is most innocent!

Bloodhounds, not men! glut yourselves well with me:
I will not give you that fine piece of nature
To rend and ruin.

He is taken out.

Camillo. What say ye now? my Lords!
Judge. Let tortures strain the truth till it be white
As snow thrice-sifted by the frozen wind!
Camillo. Yet stain'd with blood.
Judge. (*to Beatrice*). Know you this paper? Lady!
Beatrice. Entrap me not with questions! Who stands here
As my accuser? Ha! wilt thou be he
Who art my judge? Accuser, witness, judge,—
What! all in one? Here is Orsino's name;
Where is Orsino? Let his eye meet mine!
What means this scrawl? Alas! ye know not what,
And therefore, on the chance that it may be
Some evil, will ye kill us?
An Officer (*entering*). Marzio's dead.
Judge. What did he say?
Officer. Nothing. As soon as we
Had bound him on the wheel, he smiled on us,
As one who baffles a deep adversary;
And holding his breath, died.
Judge. There remains nothing
But to apply the question to those prisoners
Who yet remain stubborn.
Camillo. I overrule
Farther proceedings; and in the behalf
Of these most innocent and noble persons
Will use my interest with the Holy Father.
Judge. Let the Pope's pleasure then be done! Meanwhile
Conduct these culprits each to separate cells;
And be the engines ready! for this night,
If the Pope's resolution be as grave,
Pious, and just, as once, I'll wring the truth
Out of those nerves and sinews, groan by groan.

A Hall of the Prison. LUCRETIA *and* GIACOMO *have confessed, and* BEATRICE *is condemned with them. To her young brother,* BERNARDO, CAMILLO *speaks of his unavailing appeal for mercy.*

Camillo. The Pope is stern : not to be moved or bent.
He look'd as calm and keen as is the engine
Which tortures and which kills, exempt itself
From aught that it inflicts : a marble form,
A rite, a law, a custom,—not a man.
He frown'd, as if to frown had been the trick
Of his machinery, on the advocates
Presenting the defences, which he tore
And threw behind, muttering with hoarse, harsh voice,
"Which among ye defended their old father
Kill'd in his sleep ?" Then to another—"Thou
Dost this in virtue of thy place : 'tis well."
He turn'd to me then looking deprecation,
And said these three words, coldly : "They must die !"

Bernardo. And yet you left him not ?

Camillo. I urged him still,—
Pleading, as I could guess, the devilish wrong
Which prompted your unnatural parent's death ;
And he replied : "Paolo Santa Croce
Murder'd his mother yester evening,
And he is fled. Parricide grows so rife
That soon, for some just cause no doubt, the young
Will strangle us all dozing in our chairs.
Authority and power and hoary hair
Are grown crimes capital. You are my nephew ;
You come to ask their pardon ; stay a moment !
Here is their sentence : never see me more
Till to the letter it be all fulfill'd !"

Bernardo. O God ! not so. I did believe indeed
That all you said was but sad preparation
For happy news. O, there are words and looks
To bend the sternest purpose ! Once I knew them ;
Now I forget them at my dearest need.

What think you, if I seek him out, and bathe
His feet and robe with hot and bitter tears,
Importune him with prayers, vexing his brain
With my perpetual cries, until in rage
He strike me with his pastoral Cross and trample
Upon my prostrate head, so that my blood
May stain the senseless dust on which he treads,
And remorse waken mercy? I will do it.
O, wait till I return!

Camillo. Alas! poor boy!
A wreck-devoted seaman so might pray
To the deaf sea.

Enter LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, *and* GIACOMO, *guarded.*

Beatrice. I hardly dare to fear
That thou bring'st other news than a just pardon.

Camillo. May God in heaven be less inexorable
To the Pope's prayers than he has been to mine!
Here is the sentence and the warrant.

Beatrice (*wildly*). O!
My God! Can it be possible I have
To die so suddenly? So young to go
Under the obscure, cold, rotting, wormy ground!
To be nail'd down into a narrow place;
To see no more sweet sunshine; hear no more
Blithe voice of living thing; muse not again
Upon familiar thoughts, sad—yet thus lost!
How fearful, to be nothing!—Or to be——
What? O, where am I? Let me not go mad!
Sweet Heaven! forgive weak thoughts.——If there should be
No God, no Heaven, no Earth in the void world,
The wide, gray, lampless, deep unpeopled world!
If all things then should be—my father's spirit,—
His eye, his voice, his touch surrounding me,
The atmosphere and breath of my dead life!
If sometimes, as a shape more like himself,

Even the form which tortured me on earth,
Mask'd in gray hairs and wrinkles, he should come
And wind me in his hellish arms, and fix
His eyes on mine, and drag me down, down, down!
For was not he alone omnipotent
On earth, and ever present? Even though dead,
Does not his spirit live in all that breathe,
And work for me and mine still the same ruin,
Scorn, pain, despair? Who ever yet return'd
To teach the laws of death's untrodden realm?
Unjust perhaps as those which drive us now,
O whither? whither?

Lucretia. Trust in God's sweet love,
The tender promises of Christ! Ere night
Think we shall be in Paradise!

Beatrice. 'Tis past!
Whatever comes, my heart shall sink no more.
And yet, I know not why, your words strike chill.
How tedious, false, and cold, seem all things! I
Have met with much injustice in this world;
No difference has been made by God or man,
Or any power moulding my wretched lot,
'Twixt good or evil as regarded me.
I am cut off from the only world I know,
From light, and life, and love, in youth's sweet prime.
You do well, telling me to trust in God;
I hope I do trust in him. In whom else
Can any trust? And yet my heart is cold.

During the latter speeches GIACOMO *has been speaking with* CAMILLO, *who now goes out.*

Giacomo. Know you not? Mother! Sister! know you not?
Bernardo even now is gone to implore
The Pope to grant our pardon.

Lucretia. Child! perhaps
It will be granted. We may all then live
To make these woes a tale for distant years.

O, what a thought! It gushes to my heart
Like the warm blood.

Beatrice. Yet both will soon be cold.
O trample out that thought! Worse than despair,
Worse than the bitterness of death, is hope.
It is the only ill which can find place
Upon the giddy, sharp, and narrow hour
Tottering beneath us. Plead with the swift frost
That it should spare the eldest flower of Spring;
Plead with awakening Earthquake, o'er whose couch
Even now a city stands, strong, fair and free,—
Now stench and blackness yawns, like death! O, plead
With Famine or wide-walking Pestilence,
Blind lightning, or the deaf sea! Not with man,
Cruel, cold, formal man, righteous in words,
In deeds a Cain! No, Mother! we must die:
Since such is the reward of innocent lives,
Such the alleviation of worst wrongs;
And whilst our murderers live, and hard cold men,
Smiling and slow, walk through a world of tears
To death as to life's sleep, 'twere just the grave
Were some strange joy for us. Come, obscure Death!
And wind me in thine all embracing arms!
Like a fond mother hide me in thy bosom,
And rock me to the sleep from which none wake!
Live ye, who live subject to one another
As we were once, who now——

BERNARDO *rushes in.*

Bernardo. O, horrible!
That tears, that looks, that hope pour'd forth in prayer,
Even till the heart is vacant and despairs,
Should all be vain! The ministers of death
Are waiting round the doors. I thought I saw
Blood on the face of one,—what if 'twere fancy?
Soon the heart's blood of all I love on earth
Will sprinkle him; and he will wipe it off

As if 'twere only rain. O life! O world!
Cover me, let me be no more! To see
That perfect mirror of pure innocence,
Wherein I gazed and grew happy and good,
Shiver'd to dust! To see thee, Beatrice!
Who madest all lovely thou didst look upon,—
Thee, light of life, dead, dark; while I say Sister,
To hear I have no sister; and thou, Mother!
Whose love was as a bond to all our loves,—
Dead, the sweet bond broken——

Enter CAMILLO *and Guards.*

They come! Let me
Kiss those warm lips before their crimson leaves
Are blighted—white—cold! say farewell before
Death chokes that gentle voice! O let me hear
You speak!

Beatrice. Farewell, my tender brother! Think
Of our sad fate with gentleness as now!
And let mild pitying thoughts lighten for thee
Thy sorrow's load! Err not in harsh despair;
But tears and patience! One thing more, my child!
For thine own sake be constant to the love
Thou bearest us; and to the faith that I,
Though wrapt in a strange cloud of crime and shame,
Lived ever holy and unstain'd! And though
Ill tongues shall wound me, and our common name
Be as a mark stamp'd on thine innocent brow
For men to point at as they pass, do thou
Forbear, and never think a thought unkind
Of those who perhaps love thee in their graves!
So mayest thou die as I do; fear and pain
Being subdued. Farewell! farewell! farewell!

Bernardo. I cannot say farewell.

Camillo. O Lady Beatrice!

Beatrice. Give yourself no unnecessary pain,
My dear Lord Cardinal! Here, Mother! tie

My girdle for me; and bind up this hair
In any simple knot! ay! that does well.
And yours I see is coming down. How often
Have we done this for one another! now
We shall not do it any more. My Lord!
We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very well!

CHARLES WELLS.

1800—1879.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

The house of POTIPHAR. PHRAXANOR (*Potiphar's Wife*) *and* ATTENDANT.

Phraxanor. Dost thou despise love then?
Attendant. Madam! not quite.
A ruby that is pure is better worth
Than one that's flaw'd and streak'd with the light;
So is a heart.
Phrax. A ruby that is flaw'd
Is better worth than one that's sunk a mile
Beneath the dry sand of some desert place:
So is a heart.
Attend. Then Madam! you would say
That there is nothing in the world but love.
Phrax. Not quite: but I would say the fiery sun
Doth not o'ershine the galaxy so far,
Nor doth a torch within a jewel'd mine
Amaze the eye beyond this diamond here,
More than the ruddy offices of love
Do glow before the common steps of life.
Attend. It is a knowledge worth the stooping for.
Phrax. The soul's supremacy admits no sex:
I am a woman, and am proud of it.
We are content that man shall take the lead
Knowing he ever will look back on us
With doating eye, not caring how he steps.
Walking thus blindly, we may guide him so
That he shall turn which way shall please us best:

So we can beckon him where'er we will,
And lead him ever round about his grave,
And in, whene'er we list.
All matters that are greater than ourselves
Do trace their secret graces to our hands.
For glory captains struggle in the fight,
And play against the bulwark of the foe
The o'erbrowing engines in the stubborn siege;
But love doth brace the garland on his head,
Making proud victory sweeter than it is.
What warlike prince did doff his laurel yet
But he did cast it in some fair maid's lap,
Saying—" My greatness I commit to thee,
Mistress of it and me and my proud heart."
He who has won, whate'er he still desired
Strewing his path with flowers of sweet success,
Is yet a poor and melancholic man,
Sad as a beggar craving in a porch,
Being denied the woman he does love.
Love doth attach on independency:
Bravery of suits enriching the bright eye,
Sweetness of person, pleasure in discourse,
And all the reasons why men love themselves; —
Nay! even high offices, renown, and praise,
Greatness of name, honour of men's regard,
Power and state and sumptuous array,
Do pay a tribute at the lips of love,
Fetching their freshness and their darling grace
From woman's approbation,—waiting still
Close to her elbow till she please to smile
Upon the cause whereof the man is proud,
And say that it is well. Our witchery
Doth claim their rarity as our prime jest.
Though but the footstool of a royal king,
When we betray and trip him to the earth,
His crown doth roll beneath us. Horses have not

Such power to grace their lords, or break their necks,
As we : for we add passion to our power.
They think us gentle, second unto them,
And blind them to the wheels whereon we work.
Our will is the strong rudder to our bark,
Our wit the sails, beauty the swelling tide,
Caprice the tackle serving to all winds,
(Though light as nothing, yet it tells like truth,)
And constancy the anchor that's upheaved,
For ever falling and yet never struck.
Thus do we voyage o'er the fickle world,
Marking our image upon every wave,
Still moving onward to what port we will.
Ay! there it is : who can controul our wills?
Judgment and knowledge, gray-beard wisdom, are
Devoted straw unto our burning will.
We will not fear; and if we spy a toy,
We'll reach it from the moon, with sudden hand.
Why, what shall stop us in our enterprise?

Attend. Madam! your speech is fire.

Phrax. Doth it burn you?

Attend. I did not think that I had lived so long
As I have lived.

Phrax. Indeed!—Why do you blush?

Attend. Because I never dared to trust my thought,
And lo! it has escaped.

Phrax. Do you, then, love?

Attend. In sooth I ever fear'd to call it love :
I knew a minstrel who had fallen in love,
And, though he sung the more his plaintive notes,
Yet never was he merry any more.

Phrax. A wanton waste of frail mortality
To keep the portal of a sepulchre,
And wet a pleading lute with mellow tears,
And hoop the heart with melancholy strains!
That man does doat upon his very grief;

The gaudy-colour'd story of his mind,
Imagination, is his bedfellow,
The past and future being both forgot,
The precious present running all to waste.
There is an ancient fashion in the world,—
E'en sigh and choose again!

Attend. This may be well.

Phrax. It is the five-fold custom of the day.

Attend. One flower in my bosom were enough;
And I have got one in my memory
I would not part with for a wilderness.
O, it is delicate and lovely too,
Beyond the grossness of this heartless world.
Your pardon, Madam! in all your chronicles
I never knew you credit your own sex
For perfect truth.

Phrax. Because it is a fable.

Attend. I hope not, Madam!

Phrax. Nay! it is a fable.
Give me your arm over these ivory steps!
I'll sit in my lord's high seat, and prove it so.
Truth is sublime, the unique excellence,
The height of wisdom, the supreme of power,
The principle and pivot of the world,
The key-stone that sustains the arched heavens;
And Time, the fragment of Eternity,
Eternity itself, but fills the scale
In Truth's untrembling hand. His votaries
Belong to him entire, not he to them;
The immolation must be all complete:
And woman still makes reservation.
Our feeling doth resemble the king's coin,—
No counterfeit, for it doth bear our weight,
The perfect image, absolute, enthroned.
Now the king's coin belongs to many men,
And only by allowance is call'd his:

Just so our feeling stands with circumstance.
Whene'er the king doth give a golden mark,
The addition is the image of himself.
'Tis so with woman's feeling—mark me well!
'Tis true we have the power to love and hate,
Indulge antipathies and sympathies;
But power to pierce through thought to absolute truth,
Man's reasoning imagination, still
Is compromised in our maternal sex;
Ours is a present, not an abstract power;
And with it so much art, which, in a woman,
Did never fail to make a giant kneel.
If Art and Honesty do run a race,
Which tumbles in the mire? Ask those that starve!
Love is the purest essence of our souls,
And who can tell how many modest maids
Have paid its tribute to an early tomb,
The martyrs of our proper sacrifice!
Question the practice, and I do avouch,
So marr'd is Nature, that this constancy
(The rarest jewel that the world can boast)
Is the fine failing of our weaker sex:
For men affirm, and I believe it too,
That Truth is greater than the world beside.
Herein we flag, herein our weakness faints.
Meekness and patience, tenderness and love,
These qualities are our inheritance;
Knowledge and wisdom, love of truth and power,
Are the strong engines in the heart of man.
Our chiefest virtue is our fortitude;
Yet maids who die in love do lack it much,
Showing the world a bauble to their griefs.
Our chiefest power is our stubborn will,
Which we do lack the constancy to check,
Seeing it is our agent and not Truth's,
A giant dwarf, to forage for ourselves.

Therefore, since Truth requires that I should lay
Me prostrate at her foot and worship her
Rather than wield her sceptre and her power,
I shall be bold to follow mine own way,
And use the world as I find wit and means;
And as I know of nothing but old age
To bound my will, so nothing will I fear.—
But I waste words: you do not understand.

Attend. Madam! assuredly your speech doth sound
Like sense,—I cannot tell——

Phrax. Silence! No more!
Suppose you did expect the man you love
To wait on you about this place and time,
What habit and behaviour would you use?

Attend. Were I, like you, a lady of estate,
I would adorn my brow with a bright star
Of crusted diamond's lustre, stain'd with gold,
Like to a frosted sunflower when the morn
Blinks in the East and plays upon its front;
My hair should bear a tiara of bright gems;
And all my velvet should be loop'd about
With colours blending into harmony.
I would sip water fragranced with sweet gum,
To give my breathing sweetness. Half-reclined,
I would receive him with a free discourse
Which he should lead, wherein I'd acquiesce.

Phrax. Ah, child! there lies more mischief in a smile
Than in the king's own house and all his waste
Of wreathèd gold and weighty jewelry.—
Come, help me to dress straight!

Attend. What fashion? Madam!

Phrax. The sultry hour well suits occasion:
That silk of gossamer like tawny gold,—
Throw it on loosely! So, 'tis well; yet stay!
See to the neck! fit thou some tender lace
About the rim! The precious jewel shown

But scantily is oft desirèd most;
And tender nests scare not the timid bird.
A little secret is a tempting thing,
Beyond wide truth's confession. Give me flowers,
That I may hang them in my ample hair;
And sprinkle me with lavender and myrrh!
Zone me around with a broad chain of gold,
And wreathe my arms with pearls! So,—this will do!
(*Aside*) And in good time, for yonder Joseph comes,
Which saves me the command to bring him here.
Give me a cup of wine!

Attend. Amber or purple?

Phrax. Amber with the spice of Araby.—
I hear his measured yet elastic step
Staidly advance along the corridor;
And from this damask'd alcove unobserved
Can contemplate his beauty as he comes.
What thoughtful wisdom in that face of youth
Blending in sweetness and in harmony!
An eye that beams with gravity and fire,—
Too much of that! that must be tamed, subdued
To the great secret, charm'd to oblivion.
That marble front a veined tablet fair,
Whereon my lips shall trace my history!
His hair of that rare tint, nor black nor brown,
Of olive amber'd in the sun's bright rays
That love to linger in its massy folds,
Which o'er his shoulders, like a vexed wave,
Rolls in disorder'd order, gracefully
Meandering and curling on itself!
Youthful perfection, like a bursting rose,
Glows into manhood, and yet lingers still
In the proportions fine of moulding power
Partaking of the flower and the bud!
A living grace, repose in action,
O'erclouds him like an element divine,—

Joseph. Madam!
Phrax. You breathed upon me as you did advance,
And sweets do love sweets for an offering.
My breath is sweet and subtle, yet I dared
Not put my lips half close enough to thine
To render back the favour; so I say
The obligation did demand as much.
Why, what amaze is now upon thy face!
Will nothing please?
Joseph. Madam! your arm—pray move!
Phrax. You peevish bird—like a sick eagle I
Could fain devour, but may not!
Joseph. I beseech you,
If you respect your place, or my fair name,
Undo your prisoning arms and let me go!
Phrax. Tremble to fear the woman you might love!
Joseph. Indeed I would far sooner honour her.
Phrax. Cold! cold! still cold!—I eye you like to one
That dieth in my arms: beware you chill
Me too! You do a wrong, and herein court
Much danger. I would risk the world for you;
But, blow me cold with your sharp frosty breath,
And these same arms that gird you round about
May turn to bitter chains. We are most dear
In our affections; in vengeance most resolved.
Joseph. Madam! I have a spirit beyond fear.
God knows the duty that I owe your Lord
Would break my heart did I commit this sin.
But, Madam! hear the reason that I have,
Why my Lord's honour dearer is than life.
I do remember me, when first I came
Into this land of Egypt, fugitive,
Forlorn and wretched, bruizèd at the heart,
An iron collar round about my neck,
Degrading mark of bitter servitude,—
Stall'd in the press of slaves upon the mart,

Brimfull of misery unto the crown,
Forlorn, cast out, abandon'd and bereaved,—
A certain man did look into my face
As though to penetrate my very soul.
By slow degrees conviction work'd on him,
And through my sufferings he read my heart,
And all his features melted at the sight.
A sacred pity stole into his eyes,
That dwelt on me in gentle tenderness.
O, balm of sweetness! what a holy joy
Pour'd like a flood into my thousand wounds
Of soul and body's sore affliction,
Whereof I languish'd in my pilgrimage!
With his own hands he drew my collar off,
Nor barter'd with the merchant for my price.
He took me to his house, put me in trust,
Justly and wisely kept his eyes on me,
Weighing with care my actions and desert,
And by degrees received me to his breast;
O'erloaded me with benefits, and changed
A chain of iron for a chain of gold,
A wolf-skin kirtle for a purple cloak,
A life of wretchedness for one of peace,
A broken heart to love and tenderness.
This man, so full of human charities,
Had many precious treasures, which he gave
To me in trust, but far above the rest
Was one in which all others were absorb'd,
As in a holy consecrated shrine,
Source of his life, his honour's nourishment,
The loss of which would be a fell decree
Of shame, despair, and infamy, and death.
Madam! this honour'd honourable man
Was noble Potiphar, your Lord and mine.
Need I add more?—
I pray you, let us talk on common things!

Phrax. Neither I am not beautiful, perhaps,—
Set up to be the universal fool.
Why, here's a waste of parti-colour'd words,
High-sounding phrases, empty eloquence!
"My Lord—my Lord"—it scenteth of reproach.
Sir! have a care! blood waits on insult; ha!
One way or other I will have your heart.
Joseph (*aside*). This wondrous creature is of faultless mould,
And grace plays o'er the movement of her limbs;
Her marvelous beauty irresistible:
A double charm,—abandon'd languishment
In soft repose hints at oblivion,
In motion her imperious dignity
At secret hours might dictate to the king!
A most unscrupulous voluptuousness
Mars nature in her marvelous qualities:
A fascinating monster, fatal equally
In action or reaction of her love!
Fair flower of poisonous perfume, born to kill!
Never the demon had an agency
Where he had nought to do in work that's done.
(*Aloud.*) Take pity on yourself, on me, on him!
On me, for you would hate me mortally
When once you were awaken'd from this dream
To see the hideous monster you had made.
So utterly impossible this seems,
That I am prone to think it is a feint
To try my truth and prove my honesty.
Phrax. Ah! 'tis a feint that burns my body up
And stirs my spirit like a raging sea.
Think you to pay in words? Deeds! deeds!
For I can tell you that you have in hand
One who will have no debts.
Joseph. It is enough.
'Tis time this hopeless contest had an end.
I have borne this besieging patiently,

Still hoping to arouse your modesty.
O do not force the loathing that lies hid
Within my gall to rush into my face!

Phrax. This is the greatest blessing that you shun.

Joseph. Or the worst sin.

Phrax. O weigh not with such scales!

Joseph. O Madam! have a care!

Phrax. Listen! or else
I'll set my little foot upon thy neck.
Thou art like a beautiful and drowsy snake,
Cold and inanimate, and coil'd around
Upon a bank of rarest sun-blown flowers.
My eye shall be the renovating sun——

Joseph. Madam! forbear! I'm sick to think on it.

Phrax. You overdo this art, for Nature sure
Never did put disgust upon a lip
So near a woman's. An empoison'd cup
Might curdle all the features of thy face;
But this same blandishment upon my brow
Could never chase the colour from thy cheeks.

Joseph. Love, being forced, so sickeneth the sense
That dull monotony is nothing to it.
A pallèd appetite is sweeter far
Than shocked modesty and fierce distaste.

Phrax. You are too dead a weight.

Joseph. Why, let me go!

Phrax. My arms are faint; smile thou, they're ribs of steel.

Joseph. The sun ne'er shinèd in a pitch-black night.

Phrax. O, ignorant boy! it is the secret hour
The sun of Love doth shine most goodly fair.
Contemptible darkness never yet did dull
The splendour of Love's palpitating light.
At Love's slight curtains, that are made of sighs,
Though ne'er so dark, Silence is seen to stand,
Like to a flower closèd in the night,—
Or like a lovely image drooping down

With its fair head aslant, and finger raised,
And mutely on its shoulder slumbering.
Pulses do sound quick music in Love's ear,
And blended fragrance in his startled breath
Doth hang the hair with drops of magic dew.
All outward thoughts, all common circumstance,
Are buried in the dimple of his smile;
And the great city like a vision sails
From out the closing doors of the hush'd mind.
His heart strikes audibly against his ribs,
As a dove's wing doth break upon a cage,
Forcing the blood athrough the cramped veins
Faster than dolphins do o'ershoot the tide
Coursed by the yawning shark. Therefore I say,
Night-blooming cereus, and the star-flower sweet,
The honeysuckle, and the eglantine,
And the ring'd vinous tree that yields red wine,
Together with all intertwining flowers,
Are plants most fit to ramble o'er each other
And form the bower of all-precious Love,—
Shrouding the sun with fragrant bloom and leaves
From jealous interception of Love's gaze.
This is Love's cabin in the light of day:
But O, compare it not with the black night!
Delay thou, sun! and give me instant night,
Its soft, mysterious, and secret hours!
The whitest clouds are pillows to bright stars:—
Ah! wherefore shroud thine eyes?

Joseph. Madam! for shame.

Phrax. Henceforth I'll never knit with glossed bone;
But interlace my fingers among thine,
And ravel them, and interlace again,
So that no work that's done content the eye,—
That I may never weary in my work.

Joseph. Would that my Lord were come!

Phrax. Thy hair shall be

The silken trophy of the Spirit of Love,
Where I will lap, fair chains, my wreathèd arms.
Joseph. What's to be done? Madam! give way! I pray you.
Phrax. Beware! you'll crack my lace.
Joseph. You will be hurt.
Phrax. O for some savage strength!
Joseph. Away! away!
Phrax. So you are loose. I pray you, kill me! do!
Joseph. Let me pass out at door!
Phrax. I have a mind
You shall at once walk with those honest limbs
Into your grave.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

1800—

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

A story of the wars in Flanders in the fourteenth century: the Flemish cities striving to become independent of the Counts of Flanders. PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE *has been chosen Captain of Ghent.*

VAN ARTEVELDE *from his house is addressing the crowd in the street below.*

Artevelde. My friends! I thank you for the good respect
In which you hold me. Sirs! I thank you all.
You say that from the love you bore my father,
You and your predecessors, you'd have me,
What he was once, your Captain. Verily
I think you do not well remember, sirs!
The end of all the love you bore my father.
He was the noblest and the wisest man
That ever ruled in Ghent; yet, sirs! ye slew him;
By his own door, here where I stand, ye slew him.
What then am I to look for from your loves,
If the like trust ye should repose in me,
And in such like wise cancel it? my friends!
That were an ill reward.

Several Burgesses. Nay, Master Philip!
Art. O sirs! I know ye look not to such end;
Nor may it be yourselves that bring it round.
But he who rules must still displeasure some;
And he should have protection from the many
So long as he shall serve the many well.
Sirs! to that end his power must be maintain'd;
The power of peace and war, of life and death,
He must have absolute. How say ye? sirs!
Will ye bestow this power on me? If so,
Shout "Artevelde!" and ye may add to that
"Captain of Ghent,"—if not, go straightway home!

All shout—"ARTEVELDE, *Captain of Ghent!*"

Art. So be it!
Now listen to your Captain's first command!
It has been heretofore the use of some
On each cross accident, here or without,
To cry aloud for peace. This is most hurtful.
It much unsettles brave men's minds, disturbs
The counsels of the wise, and daunts the weak.
Wherefore my pleasure is, and I decree,
That whoso shall but talk of terms of peace
From this time forth, save in my private ear,
Be deem'd a traitor to the town of Ghent
And me its Captain; and a traitor's death
Shall that man die!
Burgesses. He shall! he shall! he shall!
We'll kill the slave outright.
Art. No! mark me farther!
If any citizen shall slay another
Without my warranty, by word or sign,
Although that slayer be as true as steel,
This other treacherous as Iscariot's self,
The punishment is death.
Ye speak no word!

What do we fight for? friends! For liberty!
What is that liberty for which we fight?
Is it the liberty to slay each other?
Then better were it we had back again
Roger d'Auterne, the bailiff. No! my friends!
It is the liberty to choose our chief
And bow to none beside. Now, ye choose me;
And in that choice let each man be assured
That none but I alone shall dare to judge him.
Whoso spills blood without my warranty,
High man or low, rich man or poor, shall die!

Burg. The man shall die; he shall deserve to die;
We'll kill him on the spot, and that is law.

Art. Hold! hold, my friends! ye are too hasty here.
You shall not kill him: 'tis the headsman's part,
Who first must have my warrant for his death.

Burg. Kill him who likes,—the man shall die: that's law.

Art. What farther knowledge of my rules ye need,
Ye peradventure may obtain, my friends!
More aptly from my practice than my speech.
Now to the Stadt-House! Bring the litter, fellows!
And there the Deans of Craft shall do me homage.

. . . . . .

SIR WALTER D'ARLON, *a knight of the Count of Flanders' party, is the accepted lover of* CLARA, ARTEVELDE'S *sister. He has ventured into Ghent, to see her; and been wounded on his passage. She is binding up his arm.*

Clara. False knight! thou comest to see thy Lady-love,
And canst not stay thy stomach for an hour
But thou must fight i' the street. Thy hungry sword,
Could it keep Lent no longer? By my faith,
Thou shalt do penance at thy Lady's feet
The live-long night for this!

D'Arlon. God's mercy! Lady!
'Twere a sharp trial, one man to keep Lent
Whilst all around kept Carnival! The sin

Was in the stomachs of your citizens.
But I will do the penance none the less.

Clara. Come, come! confess thyself! make a clean breast!
Thou'dst vow'd a vow to some fair dame at Bruges
To kill for her dear love a score of burghers.
Nay! it is certain. Never cross thyself!—
Hold up this arm!—Alas! there was a time
When knights were true, and constant to their Loves,
And had but one apiece: an honest time:
Knights were knights then. God mend the age! say I.
True as the steel upon their backs were they,
And their one Lady's word was gospel law.
Would I had lived a hundred years ago!

D'Arlon. Could you live backward for a hundred years,
And then live on a hundred years to come,
You'd not find one to love you trulier
Than I have loved.

Clara. What, what! no truer knight?
A seemly word, forsooth! hast many more such?
No truer knight! 'Tis thus you great lords live,
With flatterers round you all your golden youth,
And know yourselves as much as I know Puck:
Your heads so many bee-hives, honey'd words
Swarm in your ears, and others from your mouth
Go buzzing out to ply for sweets abroad.
And so your summer wastes, till some cold night
The cunning husbandman comes stealthily,
And there is fire and brimstone for my Lords.
Hold up this arm!—Let go my hand! I say;
Am I to tie thy bandage with my teeth?

ADRIANA, ARTEVELDE'S *betrothed, enters.*

Adr. My Lord, good heaven! Your arm—I fear you're hurt.

Clara. Hold! hush! I'll answer for thee. Merely a scratch,
A scratch, fair Lady! That, and nothing more;
It gives us no concern; 'twas thus we got it:—

Riding along the streets of this good town,
A score of burghers met us, peaceful drones,
Saying their prayers, belike; howe'er that be,
The senseless men were wrapt in such abstraction,
They heeded not our Lordship; whereat we,
Unused to such demeanour, shook ourselves
And prick'd them with our lance; a fray ensued,
And lo! as we were slaying some fourteen
That stay'd our passage, it pleased Providence,
Of whom the meanest may be instruments,
Thus gently to chastise us on the arm,
Doubtless for some good cause, though what we know not.

Adr. My Lord! you know her. She is ever thus,
Still driving things against you to your face;
And when you're gone, if I should chance let fall
A word, or but a hint of censure, as—
My Lord of Arlon is too rash, too hot,
Too anything——

Clara. She sighs, and says—Too true!

Adr. No! verily. But why, my Lord! come here
At all this hazard only to be rail'd at?

Clara. Yes! tell us why!

D'Arlon. Behold the very cause!

Artevelde (*entering*). Let my guard wait without!

Clara. His guard! what's that?

Art. My Lord of Arlon! God be with your Lordship!
And guide you upon less adventurous tracks
Than this you tread. I'll speak with you anon.
My Adriana! victim that thou art!
Thy lover should have been some gentle youth,
In gay attire, with laughter on his lips,
Who'd nestle in thy bosom all night long,
And ne'er let harness clink upon thine ears,
Save only in romaunt and roundelay.
Such is what should be, and behold what is!
A man of many cares new taken up,

To whom there's nothing more can come in life
But what is serious and solicitous.
One who betakes him to his nuptial bed,
His thoughts still busy with the watch and ward,
And, if his Love breathe louder than her wont,
Starts from his sleep and thinks the bells ring backwards.
A man begirt with eighty thousand swords,
Scarce knowing which are in the hands of friends
And which against him : such a sort of man
Thy lover is, his fate, for life or death,
Link'd to a cause which some deem desperate.
Such is Van Artevelde,—for he is now
Chief Captain of the White-Hoods and of Ghent.

Clara. Nay ! is it even so ?

Art. Even so it is.

Adr. And thou art Captain of these savages !
And thou wilt trample with them through the blood
Of fellow-men ; alas ! it may be too
Of fellow-citizens,—for what care they ?
And thou, who wert a gentle-hearted man,
Must lead these monsters where they will !

Art. Not so !
I purpose but to lead them where I will.

Adr. Then they will turn upon thee. Never yet
Would they endure a chief that cross'd their humour.

Art. That is the patience they've to learn from me.
The times have tamed them, and mischance of late
Has forced an iron bit between their teeth,
By help whereof I hope to rein them round.

Clara. O, they will murder thee !

Art. It may be so ;
But I hope better things. Yet this is sure,—
That they shall murder me ere make me go
The way that is not my way for an inch.

Adr. Alas ! and is it come to this ? O God !

Art. This I foresaw ; and things have fallen out

No worse than I forewarn'd thee that they might.
What must be, must! My course hath been appointed:
For I feel that within me which accords
With what I have to do. The field is fair,
And I have no perplexity or cloud
Upon my vision. Every thing is clear.
And take this with thee for thy comfort too!
That man is not the most in tribulation
Who, resolute of mind, walks his own way,
With answerable skill to plant his steps.

. . . . . .

In the second part of the play VAN ARTEVELDE *is Regent of Flanders, so far successful, but with ever-increasing difficulties and dangers.* ADRIANA *is dead; the persons of the drama else are different.* ARTEVELDE *has sought help of England against France, which supports the claim of the Duke of Burgundy as Count of Flanders. His agent and friend,* FATHER JOHN, *tells him that in England they mislike his cause, the cause of the burghers against the nobles:—*

Jack Straw, Wat Tyler, Lister, Walker, Ball,
That against servage raised the late revolt,
Were deem'd the spawn of your success. Last year
Has taught the nobles that their foes at home
Are worthier notice than the French. In truth
They should not be displeased at any ill
That might befall you.

Artevelde. Father! so I think.
Lo! with the Chivalry of Christendom
I wage my war,—no nation for my friend,
Yet in each nation having hosts of friends:
The bondsmen of the world, that to their lords
Are bound with chains of iron, unto me
Are knit by their affections. Be it so!
From kings and nobles will I seek no more
Aid, friendship, nor alliance. With the poor
I make my treaty; and the heart of man
Sets the broad seal of its allegiance there,

And ratifies the compact. Vassals! serfs!
Ye that are bent with unrequited toil,
Ye that have whiten'd in the dungeon's darkness
Through years that knew not change of night and day,
Tatterdemalions, lodgers in the hedge,
Lean beggars with raw backs and rumbling maws
Whose poverty was whipp'd for starving you,—
I hail you my auxiliars and allies,
The only potentates whose help I crave!
Richard of England! thou hast slain Jack Straw;
But thou has left unquench'd the vital spark
That set Jack Straw on fire. The spirit lives.
And as, when he of Canterbury fell,
His seat was fill'd by some no better clerk,
So shall John Ball that slew him be replaced.
And if I live and thrive, these English Lords
Double requital shall be served withal,
For this their double-dealing.—Pardon me!
You are but just dismounted, and the soil
Of travel is upon you. Food and rest
You must require.—Attendance there! what ho!

Enter two serving-men.

These will supply your wants. To-morrow morn
We will speak more together. Father John!
Though peradventure fallen in your esteem,
I humbly ask your blessing, as a man
That, having pass'd for more in your repute
Than he could justify, should be content,
Not with his state, but with the judgment true
That to the lowly level of his state
Brings down his reputation.

Father John. O my son!
High as you stand, I will not strain mine eyes
To see how higher still you stood before.
God's blessing be upon you! fare you well!

Artevelde (*alone*). The old man weeps. Let England play me false!
The greater is my glory if the day
Is won without her aid. I stand alone;
And standing so, against the mingled might
Of Burgundy and France, to hold mine own
Is special commendation; to prevail
So far as victory were high renown;
To be foredone no singular disgrace.

. . . . .

The last battle: on the banks of the Lis. ARTEVELDE *is defeated.*

Artevelde. I bleed, Van Ryk! can anything be done?
For if there can, my spirit's sight is dimm'd,
And I discern it not.
Van Ryk. To fly, my Lord!
Is what remains.
Art. To fly! Then mount my horse,
And make away before the general flight
Chokes up the bridge!
Van Ryk. Not I, my Lord! Your horse
Should bear his proper burthen: mount, yourself!
Art. Never, Van Ryk! My errand upon earth
Ends in this overthrow. Bind up my wound!
Give me but strength again to reach the field,
And I will carve myself a nobler death
Than they design'd me. God would not permit
That I should fall by any hand so base
As his who hurt me thus.
Van Ryk. Whose hand was that?
Art. Sir Fleureant's. He stabb'd me on the bridge,
And fled amongst the French.
Van Ryk. O monstrous deed!

(SIR FLEUREANT *owed his life to* ARTEVELDE.)

Art. I hid it whilst I could, which was not long;
And being seen so tottering in my seat,

The rumour ran that I was hurt to death,
And then they stagger'd. Lo! we're flying all!
Mount! mount, old man! at least let one be saved!
Roosdyk! Vauclaire! the gallant and the kind,
Who shall inscribe your merits on your tombs?
May mine tell nothing to the world but this:
That never did that prince or leader live
Who had more loyal or more loving friends!
Let it be written that fidelity
Could go no farther! Mount, old friend! and fly!

Van Ryk. With you, my Lord! not else. A fear-struck throng
Comes rushing from Mount Dorre. Sir! cross the bridge!

Art. The bridge—my soul abhors; but cross it, thou!
And take this token to my Love, Van Ryk!
Fly for my sake in hers, and take her hence!
It is my last command. See her convey'd
To Ghent, by Olsen or what safer road
Thy prudence shall descry: this do, Van Ryk!
Lo! now they pour upon us like a flood.
Thou that didst never disobey me yet!
This last good office render me! Begone!
Fly whilst the way is free!

Van Ryk. My Lord! alas!
You put my duty to the sternest test
It ever yet endured: but I obey.
I do beseech you come across the bridge.
This rush of runaways——

Art. Farewell, Van Ryk!

Van Ryk. Fellows! stand back! What! see you not my Lord?
Stand back! I say.

Art. Ho! turn ye round once more!
Cry "Artevelde!" and charge them once again!
What! courage, friends! we yet can keep the bridge.
Three minutes but stand fast! and our reserves
Shall succour us. Heigh! heigh, sir! who are you
That dare to touch me?

Van Ryk. Nay! nay, sirs! stand back!

Art. Shame on you, cowards! What! do ye know me? Back!
Back, villains! will you suffocate your Lord?
Back, or I'll stab you with a dagger! O,
Give me but space to breathe! Now God forgive me!
What have I done? why such a death? why thus?
O for a wound as wide as famine's mouth,
To make a soldier's passage for my soul!

They are borne along by the crowd.

Enter the Dukes of BURGUNDY *and* BOURBON, SIR LOIS OF SANXERE, *and Followers.*

Sir Lois. Halt ye a space, my Lords! ye can not pass.
The bridge has broken down beneath the weight
Of them that fly.

Burgundy. A lath should bear up us,
We are so light of heart, so light of heel.
It was the leaden spirit of defeat
That broke a bridge. Shoot me a plank across,
And see if I shall strain it!

Sir Lois. Stay, my Lord!
They are pushing beams athwart the shatter'd arch,
And presently the passage shall be safe
For all the host; but farther down the stream
There are some boats, though but a few, for those
Who would be foremost.

Burgundy. I am of them. Who follows?

. . . . . .

The opposite side of the Lis. In front, among the dead and wounded, lies VAN ARTEVELDE, ELENA *kneeling beside him,* VAN RYK *and a* PAGE *standing near. Trumpets of the victorious French heard at a distance.*

Van Ryk. Bring her away! Hark! hark!

Page. She will not stir.
Either she does not hear me when I speak,
Or will not seem to hear.

Van Ryk. Leave her to me!
Fly, if thou lovest thy life, and make for Ghent!

(*To Elena.*) Madam! arouse yourself! the French come fast.
I pray you hear: it was his last command
That I should take you hence to Ghent by Olsen.

Elena. I can not go on foot.

Van Ryk. No, Lady! no!
You shall not need. Horses are close at hand;
Let me but take you hence. I pray you, come!

Elena. Take him too!

Van Ryk. The enemy is near,
In hot pursuit; we can not take the body.

Elena. The body!

Van Ryk. Hush!

Enter the Duke of BURGUNDY.

Burgundy. What hideous cry was that?
What are ye? Flemings? Who art thou? old sir!
Who she that flung that long funereal note
Into the upper sky? Speak!

Van Ryk. What I am
Yourself have spoken. I am, as you said,
Old and a Fleming. Younger by a day
I could have wish'd to die; but what of that?
For death to be behindhand but a day
Is but a little grief.

Burgundy. Well said, old man!
And who is she?

Van Ryk. Sir! she is not a Fleming.

Enter the KING, *the Duke of* BOURBON, *the* CONSTABLE *of France,* SIR LOIS OF SANXERE, SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE, *with French forces.*

The King. What is your parley? Uncle! Who are these?

Burgundy. Your Majesty shall ask them that, yourself!
I can not make them tell.

The King. Come on! come on!
We've sent a hundred men to search the field
For Artevelde's dead body.

Sir Fleureant. Sire! for that
You shall need seek no farther. There he lies!
The King. What! say you so? What! this Van Artevelde?
God's me! how sad a sight!
Burgundy. But are you sure?
Lift up his head!
The Constable. Sir Fleureant! is it he?
Fleureant. Sirs! this is that habiliment of flesh
Which clothed the spirit of Van Artevelde
Some half an hour ago. Between the ribs
You'll find a wound, whereof so much of this
(*Drawing his dagger*)
As is imbrued with blood denotes the depth.
The King. O me! how sad and terrible he looks!
He hath a princely countenance. Alas!
I would he might have lived, and taken service
Upon the better side!
Burgundy. And who is she?
ELENA *raises her head from the body.*
Bourbon. That I can answer. She's a traitress vile,
The villain's paramour.
(ELENA *had been* BOURBON'S *mistress; but from truer love and loving admiration had given herself to* VAN ARTEVELDE.)
Sir Fleureant. Beseech you, sir!
Believe it not! She was not what you think;
She did affect him, but in no such sort
As you impute, which she can promptly prove.
ELENA *springs to her feet.*
Elena. 'Tis false! thou liest! I was his paramour.
Bourbon. O shameless harlot! dost thou boast thy sin?
Ay, down upon the carrion once again?
Ho, guards! dispart her from the rebel's carcase,
And hang it on a gibbet! Thus, and thus,
I spit upon and spurn it.
Elena. Miscreant foul! black-hearted felon!

She has snatched ARTEVELDE'S *dagger from its sheath, and aims a blow at* BOURBON, *which is intercepted by* SIR FLEUREANT.

Ay! dost baulk me? There!
As good for thee as him!

She stabs SIR FLEUREANT, *who falls dead.*

Burgundy. Seize her! secure her! tie her hand and foot!
What! routed we a hundred thousand men
Here to be slaughter'd by a crazy wench?

The Guards rush upon ELENA; VAN RYK *endeavours to defend her; both are killed.*

Bourbon. So! cursed untoward vermin! are they dead?
His very corse breeds maggots of despite.
Burgundy. I did not bid them to be kill'd.
Captain of the Guard. My Lord!
They were so sturdy and so desperate
We could not else come near them.
The King. Uncle! lo!
The Knight of Heurlée too, stone dead!
Sir Lois. By heaven,
This is the strangest battle I have known!
First we've to fight the foe, and then the captives.
Bourbon. Take forth the bodies! For the woman's corse,
Let it have Christian burial! As for his,
The arch-insurgent's, hang it on a tree
Where all the host may see it!
Burgundy. Brother! no!
It were not for our honour, nor the King's,
To use it so. Dire rebel though he was,
Yet with a noble nature and rare gifts
Was he endow'd: courage, discretion, wit,
An equal temper, and an ample soul,
Rock-bound and fortified against assaults
Of transitory passion, but below
Built on a surging subterranean fire
That stirr'd and lifted him to high attempts.

So prompt and capable, and yet so calm,
He nothing lack'd in sovereignty but right,
Nothing in soldiership except good fortune.
Wherefore with honour lay him in his grave!
And thereby shall increase of honour come
Unto their arms who vanquish'd one so wise,
So valiant, so renown'd. Sirs! pass we on;
And let the bodies follow us on biers!—
Wolf of the weald and yellow-footed kite!
Enough is spread for you of meaner prey;
Other interment than your maws afford
Is due to these. At Courtray we shall sleep;
And there I'll see them buried, side by side.

RICHARD HENGIST HORNE.

1803—

COSMO DE' MEDICI.

COSMO, *Grand Duke of Tuscany, has two sons, of different disposition,*—GIOVANNI, *the elder, studious,*—GARCIA, *choosing the fields. They both love* IPPOLITA. *In a hasty quarrel, begun by* GIOVANNI, *annoyed at being foiled in a boar-hunt, and embittered by the inopportune discovery of each other's love,* GIOVANNI *receives a death-wound from the hand of* GARCIA. *Returning home,* GARCIA *is baited with inquiries which he can not answer. At last he is sent for by the Duke. The Father must be the Judge.*

Enter an Attendant.

Garcia. Well, what next?
Attendant. My Lord!
His Highness waits within his private chamber
Your prompt attendance.
Garcia (*sternly, after some hesitation*). I have heard you.
What farther would the Duke with me? my trial
Exceeds all condemnation. What is this?
Methought I had pass'd the worst! Why, so I have.

Nought more remains but idle repetition,
Queries, conjectures, probabilities.
These blows do harden me. . . .
Remorse is beggar'd; scarcely grief remains;
And of concealment I am grown so sick,
That on my coffin I would gladly sit,
Saying—"Cease all this prate! 'Twas I that slew him."
But I have taken my stand beyond retreat:
This deed, O Cosmo!—it is none of mine.

The Duke is in his private apartment,—a curtain drawn across, hiding the end of it.

Cosmo. The solid earth beneath me seems to rock;
Yet will not I. Like Justice, will I stand
Upon my own foundation, steel'd in right!
And thou, O vast marmoreal arch above,
Whereon the luminous host in silence range,—
Glorified giants and portentous powers,
Coeval, coeternal with the spheres,—
Who gaze with solar face on this my deed!
O spanning arch! yawn thou, and let heaven down
To crush me ere I do it, if I be wrong!

Enter GARCIA.

Garcia (*after a pause*). Sir! I am here.
Cosmo (*advancing close and fixing his eyes upon him*).
Art worthy to be here?
Shouldst thou not rather be within thy tomb?
Garcia. I rather would be there.
Cosmo. Wherefore wouldst rather?
Garcia. Because, sir! I am sick of this vile life
Which I am made to lead by constant questions
Touching my brother's absence. Wheresoe'er
I turn, suspicions fang me; words are fangs,
And looks are words,—therefore I'm sick of life.
Cosmo. Thou dost anticipate me, and thy craft
Equals thy fix'd audacity.
Garcia. What craft?

Cosmo. Come, let's be brief! you know Giovanni's murder'd!
Garcia. Murder'd, my Lord!—impossible.
Cosmo. Thou didst it!
Thou art the murderer!
Garcia. What hideous liar
Hath blown this monstrous seed in your quick ear?
Cosmo. Thou hast a demon's tongue, O iron-faced boy!
That should be rooted from its upas hold
And cast to hungry imps. I know thou didst it.
Garcia. Then may your Highness listen to these facts:
Cornelio and Dalmasso are both murderers,
And all the rest who follow'd to your wars;
My mother is a murderess, in that she
Hath wish'd success to wars her kin have waged;
Then there's Ippolita, a murderess too,—
Self-sacrificed and in a convent buried!
And those who ne'er have done a deed of death
Have oft in private thoughts imagined it
From causes trivial that have stirr'd their passions.
Even the child who strikes intends to kill.
Thus, all the world——
Cosmo. Boy! boy! no more! thou utterest
Words: the base coin of self-deceptive fiends.—
I have a picture here, of ancient date,
Which looks eternal—placed beyond Time's hand.
It was thy mother's gift when first we married,
And hath been treasured since most sacredly.
A solemn lesson doth the subject teach
To erring mortals. Recognize! acknowledge!

He throws aside the curtain and discovers the form of GIOVANNI. GARCIA *utters no cry, but rushes down to the front, followed by* COSMO, *who points to his face.*

Garcia (*after a pause of horror*). I did it!
Cosmo. O unnatural government,
That in a mental den lock'd up such deed!
How doth it force itself through the cold pores

Of that metallic mask, and curdle there!
Garcia! thy soul is lost.

Garcia (*abstractedly*). It is the form
Of my unburied brother!—Peaceful heaven
Cherish his soul, and let it plead my cause!

Cosmo. Thy cause? O murderous boy!

Garcia. I am no murderer.

Cosmo. Now dost thou snatch the earth from under me,
And leave me grappling space. Hast thou not said
Thou didst it?

Garcia. Father! it is true he fell
In our fierce struggle: else I had not been here,
My chance to curse.

Cosmo. What villainous evasion
Wouldst thou insinuate? Speak, ere I slay thee!
For self-command will burst my inner world,
And chaos whelm us both.

Garcia. He first attack'd me;
And in mine own defence, I know not how,—
Madly I parried him. I am innocent.

Cosmo. Monstrous untruth! thou wretch unparallel'd!
Too well I know thy brother's sweetest nature
Could ne'er have been so changed. Approach yon form!

COSMO *leads him toward the body.*

Nearer! more near! Doth not the sullen blood
Revivify, and leave its kindred earth,
Acknowledging the presence of the Destroyer?

Garcia. I see the sullen blood there fix'd, congeal'd;
I do not see it flow. Take, take away
My senses from me! do not harrow them,
Until I own what is not!

Cosmo. Garcia! Garcia!
It is enough. Behold thy brother's blood!
It cries aloud for vengeance on thy head,
Waiting heaven's mandate minister'd by me,
O! wretched father of a fratricide—

Whom by all laws of justice I am bound
To render up to death's capacious hand,—
How wretched in surviving!—But dream not
That as an impious and unequal judge
My people shall impugn me! It is better
That future times should call me barbarous
In this my private act than as a sovereign
Weak and unjust. Therefore prepare to die!

Garcia. Under what awful impulse dost thou act?

Cosmo (*pointing upward*). Under Authority!

Garcia. Life's worthless to me—but to end it thus——
You do deceive yourself! Yet hear me, father!
Show me the proof of this high mission!

Cosmo. There!—I am the father of that corpse.

Garcia (*clasping his hands*). I know it, sir! and I—I am its brother!

Cosmo. Darest thou so call thyself, who art his murderer?

Garcia. I'm no such wretch—and yet a wretch who cares not
How soon he die!

Cosmo. That moment now is come!

He draws forth GARCIA'S *broken sword.*

Garcia. Horrible death! by these cold, pausing steps—
Silent as heaven before the earth was made—
Yet thundering in the brain, as they advance,
Like slow but final judgment! Do not kill me!

Cosmo. Not final—save on earth.

Garcia. You will not kill me!
You cannot mean it!—I have done no wrong.

Cosmo. How! with yon weltering witness?

Garcia. Heaven take me home!
I see it—see nothing else——Well, well! all's o'er.
I care not, sir! I steadily tell you that.
Brother! I pardon thee! 'twas thy good chance
To die and not to suffer as I have done.
We shall be reconciled within the tomb.

Cosmo. Look up, ye fiends!—behold this broken blade!

Doth not the fragment pierce thine inmost sense
With this last proof?

Garcia. I have nought more to say.

Cosmo. Unnatural boy! 'tis fit thy course should cease,
Lest all thy family thou shouldst cut off,
Or blank their prospects and eclipse their fame,—
Choking their sun with blood, and causing tears
To fall where clarion'd glories should arise.
Leagued with fell bandits and with pirate hordes,
Perchance e'en now they hover round our gates
With bosom-heated steel.

Garcia. God is my judge!

Cosmo. In heaven. But first on earth it is ordain'd
There should be judges to arraign men's deeds,
And send the guilty hence to the Court Supreme.
Farewell, O wretched son!—I cannot give
A father's blessing—yet, my son!—farewell!

GARCIA *kneels, and* COSMO *embraces and hangs fondly over him, then lifts himself up, and raises the sword toward heaven.*

Thou constant God! sanction, impel, direct
The sword of Justice!—and for a criminal son
That pardon grant which his most wretched father
Thus in the hour of agony implores!

. . . . . .

But the fight had been witnessed; and COSMO *too late learns of the provocation by the elder son and the unpremeditated action of the younger. The mother has died of grief. The funeral of the three (the sons said to have died of pestilence) takes place at once.* CHIOSTRO, DALMAZZO, *and other Nobles, await the entrance of the Duke to begin the rites.*

Cosmo (advancing abstractedly, speaking to himself).
My lofty and firm motives, that once held
United as the Alps, are changed i' the acting
To martyr'd ashes—staked humanity!
This world's a bubble. See, where now it bursts,
And men and things fly off and melt in air!

Yon spheres are temporal, and a yawn will end
The Ptolemaic dream! Our brain's mere dust,
Moisten'd and moved by rays and dews from heaven,—
Soon dark—dry—void! Creation's final lord,
Oblivion, crown'd with infinite blank stars,
Inherits all. I've done a hydra-wrong!
Now will its monstrous constellation blazon
My deed, till heaven dissolve.

Priest. My Liege!

Chiostro. Your Highness!

Cosmo (*still in abstraction*). Could I do otherwise?—I might have waited.
Peace, Garcia! leave me!

Dalmazzo (*aside to Chiostro*). Hear you that of Garcia?

Chiostro. Did he say Leave me?

Cosmo. Still my soul is strong,
And fights up hill against an armed Conscience.
In vain!—the constant effort proves it vain.
Thus nature's secret single-combat mars
The strength of man, which else might brave the spheres
With Atlas 'neath his heel. Now, all is o'er!

Priest. My Lord!

Cosmo. I am cast backward, ne'er to rise.
All that had made me great—is gone!

Chiostro. My Liege!

A Noble. May it please your illustrious Excellency!

Cosmo. Mock not mine agony—mock not my state!
(*Recovering himself*) So—they are there! my wife—
My dear lost sons!
My noble hope, Giovanni, snatch'd away!
My dear boy, Garcia, prematurely snatch'd!
(*To the Priests.*) Pardon me! let your sacred rites proceed!

A lofty chair is placed for him, but he seats himself in a Confessional.

No! I'll sit here.

Priest. Commence the solemn service!

MASS.

Celestial beams dry up our grief
While these bright Spirits now ascend;
Our hearts pour forth but for relief,—
We know their life can never end.
No stain, no guilt is theirs:
Then purify our prayers,
And clear our souls——

The Mass pauses abruptly as COSMO *starts forward.*

Cosmo. This Mass I like not! It is vague—defective,
And most reproachful. Cease it on the instant!
How should my prayers be pure?—Yet wherefore not?
Giovanni died of pestilence—so did Garcia;
By a worse pestilence cut off, an error,
As monstrous, dark, and pagod-like in state,
As the united sense of right is vast
In all its bright proportions.
Priest. Good my Liege!
Chiostro (*aside*). Grief hath disturb'd his brain.
Dalmazzo (*aside*). What he hath done
Is now too plain. How terrible a secret
For his appall'd successor's ear!
Chiostro (*to Priest*). Speak to him!
Lo where his heavy scalding tears pour down!
Cosmo (*with forlorn dignity*). Continue! Noble gentlemen and friends!
I can not explain these things. My present state
Savours too much of the elements. 'Tis a story
Such as in pealing thunder might be told—
Yet better lost in echoes o'er the sea,
Since none can thoroughly know what's in the soul.
Pray ye excuse me! I am not much in years;
And though this morn methought my hair look'd gray,
'Tis but a few nights' snows. Yet sorrow is strong,
And I an unarm'd and a childless man.

Once more, your pardon!

He seats himself in the chair of state.

Let the Mass proceed!

MASS.

From depths of gloom and grief
Seek not a vain relief,
Till the heart's heavy load o'erflow;
But grant us strength, O Heaven! to bear
This weight of agony and fear
That presses down the atmosphere
And round our brows with searing glow
Clings like the leaden crown of Woe!

As the Mass concludes COSMO *falls back in his chair.*

Dalmazzo. The Duke! he faints!

All. The Duke!

They rush toward him.

Cosmo. 'Tis well! Great God! *thou* knowest!

Dies.

GEORGE DARLEY.

1785—1849.

ETHELSTAN.

A battle between Danes and Saxons. FRODA *and* GORM, *two Danes, meeting.*

Gorm. Well happ'd on, brother ranger of the brine!
How fares it with us?

Froda. Thou'rt so blind with dust
And blood and sweat, thou canst not see how goes
The general field?

Gorm. By mighty Thor, blind-drunken
With the hot fumes of gore! How flies the Raven?

Froda. Methinks, as I can see her through the darts,
Her beak droops somewhat.

Gorm. 'Tis to pluck the dead.

She stoops to pluck the swine-gorged Saxons bare;
Never had else look'd down.

Froda. Brave Edwal's slain.

Gorm. True! as I pass'd him now, a javelin
Stood upright in his heart. Havoc! let's on!

Froda. My bands are this way.

Gorm. This way Gorm, alone!

Enter the SAXON TURKETUL; GORM *turns to him.*

Gorm. Monstrous! the North-Sea Kraken come on land!
I thought till now that grisly animal
Had upwards of two feet. By Thor, I'm proud,
Whate'er he is to catch the prodigy
At last!—Where must I pierce his leathern scales?

Turk. Take thy good leisure! View me round and round!

Gorm. Thor! what an ankle! Thor! what limbs! O Thor!
What depth of brawn to bury a sword in!

Turk. Humph!—
There's no such superabundance about thee,
Thou skeleton of a Norway skiff on end!
Thou bug-bear from the Valley of Dry Bones!
O how my club will clatter among thy ribs!
I will make broken ice of thee.

Gorm. This sword,
That strews a field with carnage, of itself,
My sway makes Ruin's scythe. Look how it glitters,
My blood-wash'd battle-axe, that erst was brown!
Are these to be despised? Know ye my name?
Gorm, the Shield-Render! Has it never clove
Through thy dull ear?

Turk. Ay! but I've doff'd my shield:
Ergo, thou'rt no shield-render unto me.

Gorm. Of nine accomplishments I am full master;
In the Norse warrior's circle of the arts
Am perfect. At bow, battle-axe, and brand,
None can approach my skill; being ambi-dexter,
I with two javelins take two lives at once;
I play at chess well, besides other games,

As tossing up three darts, two kept in air,
One in the hand ; I swim shark-swift ; I skate
Over earth's broadest bridge, the Arctic ice,
Fast as the North-Wind ; I could ride the Nightmare
Even in her wildest rage, and shoe her after
Like your most cunning War-Smith ; I can row
Sleeker than swallow skims, and round my boat
Run outside on the slippery oars at play.
What think'st of Gorm, the Sea-King, now?

Turk. Nought worse!
Come, let us have a spice of thy perfections,
Knight of the Nine Accomplishments!

Gorm. O joy!
I combat, dauntless hero! one of the Gods,
Even mighty Thor, the Thunderer's self, in thee.

Turk. Thou art more like the Spirit of Evil, Lok,—
After thy pagan creed. Impious! I'll teach thee
Some reverence to thy Gods, false though they be.

They fight. Enter EGIL *with* SAXONS, FRODA *with* DANES; *all stand to admire the champions.*

Danes. The Dane! the Sea-King! lightning-sworded Gorm!

Saxons. The Chancellor and his iron mace! the Saxon!

Froda. Who could have thought the Wild-Bull could so wheel him,
Supple-back'd as the Serpent?

Egil. Or the Serpent
Raise him upon his footless coils as firm
To dart a blow as the Wild-Bull can stand?

Danes and Saxons. Gorm! Gorm! Turketul! Turketul! Now—

Egil and Froda. Well fought! fair trial, Southron against Norman!

Egil. There is the blow from both that must end one!

GORM *is stricken down.*

Turk. Fell, laugh'd, and died! He made a goodly end.

Froda. The yellow-footed bird will long bewail
Him who purvey'd her many a feast. Brave Gorm!

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT.

1784—1859.

A LEGEND OF FLORENCE.

GINEVRA, *when a mere girl, has been married to* AGOLANTI, *who treats her with much tyranny, though loving her in some masterful fashion.* RONDINELLI, *of gentler nature, had loved her before her marriage, and still loves her, but honourably. Her husband suspects and torments her. Her health fails; falling into a trance, she is supposed to be dead, and is laid in the family vault. Reviviug, she seeks her home;* AGOLANTI, *scared at the sight of (as he thinks) her ghost, will not admit her. She takes refuge with* RONDINELLI. *He offers to bring her to* AGOLANTI *but she refuses:—*

Ginevra. Never! the grave itself has been between us;
The hand of heaven has parted us, acknowledged
By his own driving me from his shrieking doors:
And none but thy door, and a convent's now,
To which thy honourable haste will guide me,
Shall open to me in this world again.
Shelter me till the morn!

. . . . . .

AGOLANTI *seeks her in* RONDINELLI'S *house.* RONDINELLI *informs her of his coming.*

Rondin. My mother would have been before me, Lady!
To beg an audience for her son; but you
Being still the final and sole arbitress
Of a new question, come with sudden face,
It might befit you also, for more reasons
Than I may speak, to be its first sole hearer.
Ginevra. What is it?
Rondin. Nothing that need bring those eyes
Out of the orbs of their sweet self-possession.

Your thoughts may stay within their heaven and hear it.
'Twixt it and you there is all heaven, and earth.

Ginevra. My story is known, ere I have reach'd the convent?

Rondin. Even so.

Ginevra. And somebody has come to claim me?
From *him?*

Rondin. Not *from* him.

Ginevra. From the Church, then? No!
The State?

Rondin. I said not *from* him. He is shaken
Far more than you should be, being what you are,
And all hearts loving you.

Ginevra. Himself!

Rondin. Himself.
His haughty neck yet stooping with that night
Which smote his hairs half gray.

Ginevra (*aside*). Alas! yet more
Alas, that I should say it! Not loud then?
Not angry?

Rondin. Only with your vows of refuge,
And those that stand betwixt his will and power.
Else humble; nay! in tears, and seeking pardon.
(*Aside.*) She's wrung to the core! With grief is't? and what grief?
O now all riddles of the heart of Love!
When 'twould at once be generous, yet most mean;
All truth, yet craft; a sacrifice, yet none;
Risk all in foppery of supposed desert,
And then be ready in anguish to cry out
At being believed, and thought the love it is,
Martyr beyond all fires, renouncing heaven
By very reason that none can so have earn'd it;—
O, if she pities him, and relents, and goes
Back to that house, let her yet weep for me!

Ginevra. When I said "Never" to that word "Return"
He had not suffer'd thus; had not shown sorrow;

Was not bow'd down with a gray penitence.
Sir! I would say—kind host! most kind of men!
My friend and my preserver!——

Rondin. Say no more,
So you think well of me!

Ginevra. I could say on
And twenty times as much, so you would think it
Best, some day hence.—Speak not!

Rondin. Yes! honour bids me:
Honour, above all doubts, even of poor self,
Whether to gain or lose, bids me say bravely—
Be wise while generous! Guard the best one's peace,
Whoe'er that is: *her* peace, the rights of goodness
And vindication of the o'erseeing heavens,
High above all wrong hearts,—his, or mine own!

Ginevra. Although you call me Best, who am not so,
I'll write that last and noblest admonition
Within the strongest memory of my soul,
For all our sakes. The way to him!

As she holds out to him her hand, he asks for a word at parting.

Antonio! may your noble heart be happy!—
Alas! alas! Why was that one word utter'd
To bear down the last patience of my soul,
And make me cry aloud to Heaven in misery?
I am most miserable. I am a creature
That now for fifteen years, from childhood upwards,
Till this hard moment when the heavens forbid it,
Have known not what it was to shed a tear
Which others met with theirs. Therefore mine eyes
Did learn to hush themselves, and young grow dry.
For my poor father knew not how I loved him,
Nor mother neither; and my severe husband
Demanded love, not knowing lovingness.
And now I cry out, wishing to be right,
And being wrong; and by the side of me
Weeps the best heart, which ought not so to weep,

And duty's self seems to turn round upon me,
And mock me : by whose law nevertheless
Do I abide, and will I,—so pray Heaven
To keep me in my wits, and teach me better!
Turn me aside, sweet Saints! and let me go.

. . . . . .

Meanwhile in another room where AGOLANTI *waits, he is met by* RONDINELLI'S *two friends,* COLONNA *and* DA RIVA. *Angry words arise; and* AGOLANTI (*in bitter wrath*) *and* COLONNA *stand with swords drawn when* RONDINELLI *enters with* GINEVRA, *followed by his mother and* GINEVRA'S *friends,* OLIMPIA *and* DIANA.

Rondin. Forbear! an angel comes! Take her, and pray
Just Heaven to make her happy as thyself!
Colonna. Antonio! thou art damn'd to think it. See!
Da Riva. He shrinks from her again in very fear,
Which in his rage of vanity he'll avenge.
Agolanti. I hear not what they say, my poor Ginevra!
Thinking of thee alone. Come, bear thee up,
And bravely!—as thou dost. We'll leave this place!
This way! So, so!
Da Riva. Antonio! will you let him?
Think of herself! 'Tis none of yours, this business;
But the whole earth's.
Rondin. She will not have me stay him.
I dare not. My own house too. See, she goes with him!
Da Riva. Call in the neighbours!
Colonna. Do! there's a right soul.
Tell all!
Agolanti. She's with me still! she's mine! Who stays us?
Olimpia and Diana. Ginevra! Sweetest friend!
Agolanti. Who triumphs now? who laughs?
Who mocks at pandars, cowards, and shameless women?
Ginevra (*breaking from him*). Loose me and hearken!
Madness will crush my senses in, or speak.
The fire of the heavenward sense of my wrongs crowns me;
The voice of the patience of a life cries out of me;

Every thing warns me. I will not return!
I claim the judgment of most holy Church.
I'll not go back to that unsacred house,
Where heavenly ties restrain not hellish discord,
Loveless, remorseless, never to be taught.
I came to meet with pity, and find shame;
Tears, and find triumph; peace, and a loud sword.
The convent walls—bear me to those! In secret,
If it may be; if not, as loudly as strife,—
Drawing a wholesome tempest through the streets!
And there, as close as bonded hands may cling,
I'll hide, and pray for ever, to my grave.
Come you! and you! and you! and help me walk.

Agolanti. Let her not stir! Nor dare to stir, one soul!
Lest in the madness of my wrongs I smite ye.

Ginevra (*to Agolanti*). Look at me and remember!
Think how oft
I've seen as sharp a point turn'd on thyself
To fright me,—how upon a weaker breast,—
And what a world of shames unmasculine
These woman's cheeks would have to burn in telling!
The white wrath festers in his face, and then
He's devilish.

Rondinelli. Will you let her fall? She swoons.

He catches her in his arms.

Agolanti (*offering to kill him*). Where'er she goes, she shall not go there.

Colonna (*with his drawn sword intercepting him*). Dastard!
Strike at a man so pinion'd!

Agolanti (*turning upon Colonna*). Die then for him!

Colonna. Die thou!

He runs him through.

Da Riva. He's slain! What hast thou done?

Colonna. The deed
Of his own will. One must have perish'd.

SARAH FLOWER ADAMS.

1805—1849.

VIVIA PERPETUA.

At Carthage, A.D. 204. VIVIA PERPETUA, *the widowed daughter of* VIVIUS, *a noble Roman, has become a Christian, and is in prison, for the morrow's martyrdom. Her Christian friends, her brother* ATTILIUS, *and* CÆCILIUS *take leave of her. She detains* CÆCILIUS.

Vivia. Cæcilius! go not thou!—Gaoler! give leave.
Nay! quench the lights,—my lamp will serve; and ere
The prison rounds are o'er, this youth shall meet thee
At the outer gate.
Gaoler. Thy time, how long soe'er!
Vivia. I have not spoke with thee to-night, Cæcilius!
The slightest word had made the ready tears
Brim o'er their boundaries. Said I not—Weep on?
Thou hast wept to me before, and I with thee.
Ease thy full heart! then be thou strong to listen!
I need thee;—thou canst help me, if thou wilt.
Cæcil. Help thee?—and if I will?
Vivia. But ere I speak
Of the one only thought 'twixt me and heaven,
Tell me of Nola! for my heart is yearning
To see her once again before I die.
Cæcil. She stays within her chamber; was forbid
To haste to you. She stays in sure belief
That you will be released, will come to her.
Vivia. Released I shall be! She must come to me.
She takes a golden arrow from her hair.
Give her this token! Say, our early love
Is fresh with me, as though 'twere yesterday
We wander'd, arm-encircled, gathering shells.—
Could it be yesterday she talk'd of it?—
Tell her, that He for whom I die was one
Who taught all love to hope! so bid her thought

Soar up, to meet my blessing on the way,
Sure, unforgotten as she is in death,
I still may be her friend in heaven !—Your thoughts ?—
They wander.

Cæcil. They are still with thee !—with thee,
And with the morrow.

Vivia. Mark me ! many thoughts
In many morrows I now ask of thee.
Much has been said—too much—of loving kindness
Render'd to one who was left motherless ;—
This time to-morrow—Thascius—wilt thou——

Cæcil. Will I ? O, find thy words to tell me what !

Vivia. Thou'rt young ; hast many years—and be they bless'd !
Before thee. I have mark'd a strength in thee,
Seen most within these latter days of trial ;
And Heav'n hath prosper'd so the thought that thou
Wilt come to hold the faith ; I unto thee,
Commit in trust this child, my Thascius,—
In trust unto thy thought. It may be years—
Never, perchance—ere act of thine may serve ;
Still let him have a home within thy thought.
And thy good strength, and youth, and years to come,
And fate alike, so oft a loving bond,
And something for his mother's memory,——
No ! no ! there needs no word of thine, Cæcilius !
That look has laid an answer at my heart !
Blessing of Heaven descend on thee and him !

Cæcil. I would I were your God, to give you wings
Now, now to bear you up ! I would not stay you,
Though they would take you quite away from me.
But, O, that morrow's doom !

Vivia. Why fear it thus ?
The pain of martyrdom dwells not in death.
Think'st thou the love that dares it hath not joy
In loving, to make light the keenest pangs
That touch the body ? No !—the torture comes,

And sharpen'd fangs are busiest at the heart,
When all the old affections are dragg'd forth,
And torn upon the rack. What is't to die?

Cæcil. To sink in quiet 'neath a sighing tree,
Like to the warrior in the song you loved;
To die like him, lapsing in quiet shadow,
Were peace: but, oh, the death that waits for thee!—
The glare—the tumult!

Vivia. What are they? since I
Have sat alone, girt with the dreadful dark,
The never-ceasing night, with that one image
In terrible light, stern, pale, and palpable,—
The image of my father in his grief:
Eyes shut—the same—or staring wide again,
Still would it come—look, look, now while I speak!

VIVIUS *appears with a lamp at the opposite side of the quadrangle. He comes slowly forward. The father and daughter gaze at each other for some time without speaking.*

Vivius. Do ye know me, who I am?—no! no!—no wonder!
I am older many years since yester morn.
I was before that time a man named Vivius,
A happy father, who did read his hopes
Upon the noble brows, and, as he thought,
The most true brows, of a belovèd daughter!
I am—I know not what. And when I ask
Help of the outward universe to bring
Back to myself the former consciousness,
The sun shuts up the while I look on him;
The stars all hurry past me while I pray;
The earth sinks from my feet: all false! all false!

Vivia. No bitterness now!

Vivius. No bitterness?—Gods,
No bitterness!

He weeps.

Vivia. My father! that thou couldst
Crowd all thyself at once into one thought!

Think of the faith—look on me as I stand,
A creature anguish'd at thy agony,—
How far beyond the morrow's suffering!—
One who hath lost even the few brief hours
She reckon'd as her own, to tend her child;—
Then think upon the faith that bids my heart
Have yet beneath it all, a hope as calm
As were his lids, when last I parted from him.
Whence comes such miracle—of whom such faith?

Vivius. Faith! faith!—is that the word?—and miracle!
Yes!—that thy tongue would stir to speak the word!
What is thy faith?—a lie. What are its fruits?
What made thee false to me? What made thee thus
Shew forth fine joys to woo me in thy face,—
A blackening plague-spot hidden in thy breast;—
Lured me to build my trust on thee for rock,
While thou wert rotten as the poisonous heap
The sea throws up for waste? And this is faith!
A lie!—it is a lie!

Vivia. No more! forbear!
I see, though thou dost not, God's angel stand
Sheltering my hope in thee! Thou shalt not speak,
Lest he be moved to stretch a ruffled wing
Up to the Lord, with those accusing words.
I will not have thee less before the Lord
When I shall plead for thee—as plead I will—
Plead for the earthly father, who once taught
His child in youth to love the truth, so led
Unto the heavenly. Hath it been gainsay'd?
Thou know'st it hath not. Thou dost know 'twas love,
And love alone, that, fearful of thy grief,
Delay'd to bring it on thee, hoping still
A way might show to mitigate the pang.
And I will not be lesser than I am,
Unworthy as I am for this emprize;—
For thy sake, not. 'Twas thou who madest me true,

And true I am ; 'twas thou who madest me dare,
And I have dared. Who was it in my youth
Did crown our Dido empress of my soul,
For that she gave her blood for double worth,—
A faith unbroken, and her people's good?
Did tell me of the wife of Asdrubal,
How that she loved the honour of her Carthage
More than her life, and leapt from off the walls
Giving herself, her children, to the flames?
My Carthage is the world! I do but stretch
The line they held—Christ guiding still my hand,
Who first did point the way.

Vivius. And can it be
Thou art that very child so oft hath stood
Between my knees to listen those old tales?
O for that child again!

Vivia. I am that child
In all that's simple truth. It was your wont
To question, that an answering lisp might come
Of names, of things, almost too large for one
Of infant speech. Ask me of this,—what is it?
Why, I should say, it is a water-cruise ;
I know it that, and could not say it other.
I could no more deny to those who ask
Of me, what am I ;—I do know myself
A Christian, and must say I am a Christian.

Vivius. Thy breath comes to me like the sharpen'd air
To cut my heart in twain ; cold—cold. But no!
Here's fire enough. And I will shew the world
White ashes yet may cover glowing heat!
You had a boy.

Vivia. Dead?

Vivius. To you!

Vivia. Oh, cruel!—
Oh, spare me! for 'tis here that I am weak.
No! no! spare not! 'tis here I would be strong,

And trust Christ's mercy he will guard a child
Bless'd by such love as mine hath had upon him.
Such love, sure am I, it can never perish.
E'en now doth comfort, like a flower, spring up
Sudden within my breast. You—you,—I know
That you will nourish him—will cherish him,—
Will teach his tongue the truth you taught to mine;
(And hath not Christ abundant for the rest?)
And when that he and time have smiled down sorrow,
Oft will you, while you sit and gaze on him,
See his dead mother live from out his eyes,—
His loving eyes; and then,—dear child! dear father!

Vivius (*falling at her feet*). You weep!—you weep! Oh let those tears at once
Revive my dying hopes like dew, and quench
The fire that's smouldering in a tortured brain.
Once more; yet save me—save thyself;—thou canst
'Tis not too late. Although the storm hangs black,
A word can wave it off, and bring us heaven!
Oh save me from a poison'd, livid past!
Oh save me from a future, that doth yawn
A flaming gulf of hell before my feet!
These are thy father's hands that clasp thy knees;
These are his lips, that on thy very feet
Now print their hope for mercy. Save me!—save me!

Vivia. Oh that my blood had double tide, that I
Might die another death for thy salvation!
Up! up, my father!—my own noble father!
It is thyself in me that stands erect;—
Claim kindred with thine own!

Vivius. Thou teachest well.
I thank thee for thy counsel—this the last
That we shall take together. I am up;
But not to claim. Utterly I disclaim
All kindred with thee! Blood thou'rt none of mine.
Blood thou hast none in thee; thy heart is stone.

Weakness in me to pray, to weep to it;
Weakness in thee, that thou dost blindly scan
The doom that darkly gathers o'er our house.
E'en now the Fates begin with busy finger
To weave the dusky web shall dimly shroud
Him, the devoted of a mother's shame!
Where is the hope that I should cherish him,
Poor sickly sapling, 'neath a blasted tree?
All wreck'd, near mad, 'tis like they may decree
That I, my brain on fire, my senses gone,
Wild with an agony of memory,
Taking him for my grief, should swing him thus,
And dash the life from out him!

Vivia. O for mercy!

Cæcil. The trust will hold, although no word was said.

Vivius. Thou here? Come, I must have a vow of thee.
Hearken, young sir! Swear by thy mother's dust—
Or hath this *faith* made it but rottenness?
Good boy! good boy!—truer unto dead bones
Than others unto living quivering flesh.
Yet swear!—that if in after-life you cross
The path of him was yesterday her child—
For he must live in double orphanage,
Unbless'd with e'en the memory of a mother—
Ne'er to make known to him—to him or any,
That he did hold communion with her blood.

Cæcil. I will not take such oath!

Vivius. How! (*seizing him*) Let me feel it
Come up thy throat——Speak! or——

Vivia. Cæcilius! do it!

Cæcil. I swear!

Vivius. 'Tis well. And now, farewell to all—
To thee, who art the corpse of all my hopes—
Unurn'd, unburied, ever so to be.
O hell! my very words do twist their sense
Like tortuous snakes, to sting me as I speak.
Curses on Carthage!—curses on her people!

Would that to-morrow's crowds might find the earth,
Treacherous as they, give way beneath them all,
And, with one gape of its devouring jaws,
Swallow them quick. 'Twill come, or soon or late,
The flame, the sword, and mighty desolation.
The Goth shall trample where your gardens flourish'd,
Scattering your children like the weeds they grew.

Vivia. O Christ, who wept over Jerusalem!

Vivius. Weep thou, and for thine own—no longer thine—
(Of little heed). Let me but have the power
To fix these loosen'd wits, I'll make of him
One, who would turn thy love into a curse.
Hope quickens with the thought—there's much to do:
Time narrows in, and I stay here! Away!
Thascius shall be a conqueror—shall hew
His path through this thy faith. Thou sacrifice
Hast chosen;—mark me! sacrifice shall be
His very end of life; his highest triumph
Won by the sword; and Fame, with crimson hands,
Shall steep in blood the wreath that crowns his brow.
Away! away!

Exit.

Vivia. Cæcilius! follow him!
My hope lives in thee, as thou wert Christ's angel.
To-morrow, at the last, bring me thy tidings.

Cæcil. To-morrow!

Vivia. Speak not word (nor look) to mar
My trust in thee. My trust, O God! in thee!—

She kneels.

So sure, I have no words that come as prayer.
Thou who dost all things well, shall I of thee
Crave other than thou dost? And, blessed Christ,
'Twas thou who badest us visit in their need
The widow and the fatherless, I know
Thou wilt take pity on a childless father.
Thou, the good Shepherd, who didst gently fold
Those little ones, with blessing, in thine arms,

Wilt care for him, my tender one—my yearling,
Else all bereft.—One prayer—but one—the last:
That in the final hours of this frail life,
With love and praise triumphant over all,
We may show forth thy glory, blessed Lord!
Now to my rest. Not yet—a little while.

GERALD GRIFFIN.

1803—1840.

GISIPPUS.

FULVIUS *and* SOPHRONIA *have been lovers.* FULVIUS *away, and believed to be false,* SOPHRONIA, *urged by her brother* MEDON, *consents to marry* GISIPPUS, *the friend of* FULVIUS, GISIPPUS *not knowing of the previous affection.* FULVIUS *appears on their wedding-day, and speaking with* SOPHRONIA, *each learns the other's truth. They are overheard by* GISIPPUS.

Sophronia. Nay! look not thus dejected, Fulvius!
Think that it is our fate which masters us,
And strive against it firmly!

Fulvius. Alas, Sweetest!
You counsel me in vain. Do not despise me,
That I am wanting in that stern command
Of natural feeling, and that scorn of circumstance,
That shields the breast of Gisippus.

Gisippus (*not seen*). Well put,
My friend! This is the friend, the bridegroom's friend—
Ha! torture!

Fulvius. Do not envy me the luxury
Of yielding to the pressure of my fortune!
The heart is not mechanical, nor owns
The empire of the will.
It is the universal law of Nature
That where the hand of suffering presses hard
Complaint should follow. There is a relief
In the abandonment of utter sorrow,
That only sufferers know.

Sophronia. Weak sufferers, Fulvius!
The unreasoning slaves of impulse and excitement.
Would you depress your nature to the level
Of mindless—nay! even of inanimate things?
The plant unwater'd droops; but man should meet
The malice of his fate with firmer carriage.
Alas! look on the life of the happiest here!
What is it but a war of human pride
With human suffering?—the mind, the soul,
In arms against the heart; their ally, reason,
Forcing the aching wretch to suffer greatly
And own no influence of Fate. What! still
Unmann'd at parting? Pray you, Fulvius!
Resolve me this!
Fulvius. What is it you ask?
Sophronia. Suppose,—
I do but dream now while I speak of this,—
But say that it were possible our loves
Might yet be favour'd!
Fulvius. Ha!
Sophronia. Beware, young Roman!
I speak this as a dreamer. But, suppose
Gisippus, who you know is very worthy
And loves you as a friend——
Fulvius. Alas! I've proved that,
But ill requited him.
Sophronia. I pray you hear me.
Suppose your friend should give me back the promise
That I have plight—O, most unwillingly!—
And leave me free to make my own election,
Wrong or dishonour set apart?
Fulvius. I hear ye.
Sophronia. How would my freedom move ye?
Fulvius. As my life
Restored beneath the lifted axe.
Sophronia. We should rejoice then!

Fulvius. We should pale the front,
The Afric front of Night with revel lights,
And tire her echoes with our laughter.
Sophronia. Ay!
And Gisippus would laugh too!
Fulvius. Ha!
Sophronia. He'd be
The loudest reveler amongst us. Ay!
We should be famed in story too: the best,
The truest friends, self-sacrificers! O!
Our monuments should be the memories
Of every virtuous breast. While Gisippus
Might find his own dark tomb and die forgotten!
Fulvius. What mean you?
Sophronia. Cast aside that dull respect
Of fair opinion and the world's esteem,
Which is the death of many a happiness,—
You are for Rome?—Our fate is in our hands.
The world may call it perjury in me,
In you foul treachery; but we can live
Without the world's approval—can we not?
And laugh at self-reproach too?
Fulvius. Sweetest warner!
Mine honour is not dead, though it hath slept.
What would you do?
Sophronia. I'd wake that worthiness
Within you which I know you own. O Fulvius!
You now may see how dearly I have loved you,
Since I had rather lose you—ay! my first
Old idolized affection, than behold you
Second to any in your own esteem.
Fulvius. In yours, and Virtue's, never! Do not fear it!
I came to take my last farewell, Sophronia!
Come, I can throw my helm upon my brow,
And shake my crest upon the battle-field,
And bare my bright steel with a grasp as firm

As his whose arm is nerved by glory's zeal,
Not by the madness of a broken heart.
An honourable cause, a fiery onset,
A peal of war, a—hush! one thought of thee,
And there's an end of Fulvius and his love!

Gisippus (*apart*). That speech was like ye, Roman!

Sophronia. O now you are
The gallant soul you have been, and shall be
The cherish'd memory of my heart. O Fulvius!
It is a sullen fortune that subdues us;
But we have trifled with her early smiles,
And now must strive against her hate. Farewell!
Forget me, and be happy!

Fulvius. It must be
My solace to remember you, Sophronia!
But only as a rightful sacrifice
To honour and to friendship. Dear Sophronia!
Let me be careful of his peace to whom
The Gods have given you now. He knows not yet
Of our affection. Let him never know it.
Time, absence, and the change of circumstance,
May wear me from your memory——Never droop
Your head to hear it!—and you may yet be
To Gisippus all—but away with that!
Farewell at once, for ever!

They are separating, when GISIPPUS *comes forward.*

Gisippus. Stay, Sophronia!

Sophronia. Ha! we are lost.

Gisippus. Lost! How? why? wherefore? Lady!
You, Fulvius! too. Look on me calmly, Roman!
You've known me long, beheld me in all changes,
And read my spirit in its nakedness.
In what part of my life have I betray'd
A mean or selfish nature? Ay! that gesture
Would tell me—Never. Wherefore am I then
So worthless of your confidence I must

Turn eavesdropper to gain it? Not a word?
You were eloquent but now. Ha! ha! you'll say
You had an inspiration then.

Fulvius. Gisippus!—

Gisippus. Now, can it anger you that I have play'd
A mirthful humour on you both? I've known
Long since of this, and did but seek to punish you
For your distrust. O, I have laugh'd at you
To see your fears, and must again—(*Aside*) O Gods!
My brain is scorch'd!

Fulvius. What mean you? Gisippus!

Gisippus. You say right: I was wrong to trifle with you,
But now the jest is ended. I shall laugh
No more——O never! never!
I pray you, pause one moment!

Fulvius. My kind friend!

Gisippus. Come this way, Fulvius! Sweet Sophronia!
(I must no longer call you my Sophronia)
Give me your hand too! As you gave this hand
To me, even while your heart opposed the deed,
I give it now to One who loves you dearly
And will not find that heart against him. There,
You are one! And may the Gods, who look upon
Those plighted hands, shower down upon your heads
Their dearest blessings! May you live and grow
In happiness; and I will ask no other
Than to look on and see it, and to thank
My fate that I was made the instrument
To bring it to your bosoms.

Fulvius. O my heart's physician!
Was this indeed design'd, or do you mock us?

Gisippus. This way a secret passage will conduct you
To the Temple porch. Medon, I know, has set
His soul upon my marriage; but let me meet
That consequence—the lightest! Your bride waits.
Nay!—fly! Stay not to question, nor to speak;

The interruption may give space for thought,
(*Aside.*) And thought may bring madness.—Away! the rite
Attends you. Medon is not there; nor any
Who may prevent you. With my sword and life
I will defend this passage.

He hurries them out.

Gone!—Alone!
How my head whirls, and my limbs shake and totter
As if I had done a crime. I have. I have lied
Against my heart. What think ye now? wise world!
How shows this action in your eyes? My sight
Is thick and misty; and my ears
Seem dinn'd with sounds of hooting and of scorn.
Why should I fear? I will meet scorn with scorn!
It is a glorious deed that I have done.
I will maintain it, 'gainst the wide world's slight,
And the upbraiding of my own rack'd heart.
O, there I am conquer'd.

But it is an offence to help the marriage of a maid of Athens to a stranger; and all are against him. So, debts pressing, he is left to the mercy of his creditors who sell him as a slave. He had made an appointment to meet FULVIUS; *but* FULVIUS, *not knowing the necessity, and hastily ordered to Rome, fails him, and is thought ungrateful. Time passes;* FULVIUS, *the Roman Prætor, returns triumphant from the wars, his one sorrow that he can not hear of* GISIPPUS. GISIPPUS *meets him, in his misery unrecognized, and is repulsed by the Prætor's guard. He takes shelter in a tomb, sees a murder committed, and, weary of life, suffers himself to be accused and condemned. Only at the last moment* FULVIUS *is informed concerning him.*

The place of execution: GISIPPUS, DECIUS, *and Guards.*

Decius. Remove his chains!
Gisippus. Let it be ever thus!
The generous still be poor, the niggard thrive;
Fortune still pave the ingrate's path with gold,
Death dog the innocent still! and surely those
Who now uplift their streaming eyes and murmur
Against oppressive Fate will own its justice.

Invisible Ruler! should man meet thy trials
With silent and lethargic sufferance,
Or lift his hands and ask heaven for a reason?
Our hearts must speak: the sting, the whip is on them;
We rush in madness forth to tear away
The veil that blinds us to the cause. In vain!
The hand of that Eternal Providence
Still holds it there, unmoved, impenetrable.
We can but pause, and turn away again
To mourn, to wonder, and endure.

Decius. My duty
Compels me to disturb ye, prisoner!

Gisippus. I am glad you do so, for my thoughts were growing
Somewhat unfriendly to me. World! farewell;
And thou whose image never left this heart,
Sweet vision of my memory! fare thee well.—
Pray walk this way!
This Fulvius, your young Prætor, by whose sentence
My life stands forfeit, has the reputation
Of a good man amongst ye?

Decius. Better breathes not.

Gisippus. A just man, and a grateful; one who thinks
Upon his friends sometimes; a liberal man,
Whose wealth is not for his own use; a kind man
To his clients and his household?

Decius. He is all this.

Gisippus. A gallant soldier too?

Decius. I have witness'd that
In many a desperate fight.

Gisippus. In short, there lives not
A man of fairer fame in Rome?

Decius. Nor out of it.

Gisippus. Good! Look on me now! look upon my face!
I am a villain, am I not? Nay, speak!

Decius. You are found a murderer.

Gisippus. A coward murderer,—

A secret, sudden stabber. 'Tis not possible
That you can find a blacker, fouler character
Than this of mine?

Decius. The Gods must judge your guilt.
But it is such as man should shudder at.

Gisippus. This is a wise world too, friend! is it not?
Men have eyes, ears, and (sometimes) judgment,—
Have they not?

Decius. They are not all fools.

Gisippus. Ha! ha!

Decius. You laugh!

Gisippus. A thought not worth your notice, sir!
You have those scrolls I bade you give the Prætor?
Was it not you?

Decius. I think they are now within the Prætor's hands:
His page it was to whom you gave them.

Gisippus. Ha!
Lead me on quickly then! Did I not say
He should not see them till my death was pass'd,—
Not while a quivering pulse beat in my frame,
That could awake one hope of restoration?
What! shall he say I quail'd and sought his mercy,
A wavering suicide,—and drag me back
To life and shame? Fool! idiot! But haste on!
I will not be prevented.

Fulvius (*without*). Give me way!
Way! way!—Hold! hold!

Gisippus. Shall I be cheated thus?
Your duty, officers!

Decius. Peace! 'tis the Prætor.

Gisippus. Let me not be disturb'd in my last moments!
The law of Rome is merciful in that.

Fulvius (*rushing in*). I dare not look. All silent! This is terrible.
I dare not ask,—the hue of death is round me.
In mercy speak! Is't over? Am I late?

Gisippus. I would ye were!
Fulvius. I thank ye, Gods! my soul
Is bloodless yet. I am no murderer.
Friend! Gisippus!
Gisippus. O no! you are in error, sir!
Fulvius (*approaching him*). By all the Gods——
Gisippus. Hold back, or I will spurn ye!
By all the Gods, proud Roman! it is false.
I'll not be mock'd again.
Fulvius. Is this a mockery?
Look, Romans! on this man!—O Gisippus!
Look on him!—O that pale, that wasted face!—
To him I owe all that I am master of:
Life, public honour, home and happiness.
Here in this thronged area Fulvius kneels
To his benefactor,—in that attitude
Prouder than when he took his place among
The judges of your Capitol.
Gisippus. A Prætor
Kneels at my feet! Look, look upon him, Romans!
Hear this, ye purpled ones; and hide your heads.
Behold how mean the gilded ingrate shows
Beside the honest poverty he scorn'd!
Start from the earth, man! and be more yourself:
Arch the sharp brow, curl the hard lip, and look
The heartless thing you are! Court not opinion
By this mean mockery!
Decius. Rise, my Lord!
Fulvius. Gisippus!
Are you content yet? I have knelt to you,
Not in the meanness of a crouching spirit,
But dragg'd down by the deadening self-reproach
That winter'd in my soul. But now
I have borne an insult in the streets of Rome,
Which is unto the honourable mind
What death is to the coward. Now I stand

Erect; and challenge you to name the sin
Which this endurance may not satisfy.

Gisippus. You speak this well, sir! 'faith, 'tis very well.
Certain I'm wrong. You've done nought you have done;
Nor is this air I breathe air; nor this soil
Firm earth on which we tread. Nor is my heart
A throbbing fire within me now—No! no!
Nor this hot head an Ætna. Ha!—Farewell!
Nothing of this is so. I am very wrong.

Fulvius. Yet hold——

Gisippus (*in fury*). What! haughty ingrate! feel I not
The fasces of your satellites yet on me?
Hold back! Cross, touch me, stay me, speak again,—
And by the eternal light that saw my shame
I'll gripe that lying throat until I choke
The blackening perjury within.—O sin!
O shame! O world! I am now a weak, poor wretch,
Smote down to the very manhood. Judgment lost,
I've flung the reins loose to my human spirit,—
And that's a wild one. Rouse it, and you pluck
The beard of the lion. Gisippus, that was
The lord of his most fiery impulses,
Is now a child to trial. High philosophy,
With its fine influences, has fled his nature;
And all the mastery of mind is lost.

Fulvius. Yet would you hear——

Gisippus. Could I chain up my heart,
That bounds unbridled now, and force my sense
To drink your words, it were no less in vain:
That heart has grown inapt for gentleness
And hard to every natural affection.
You may as well go talk the warm red blood
Out of that column. Pray begone! you vex me.

Fulvius. You shall not go! Curse me—but speak not thus!
Will nothing move you to hear me?

Gisippus. Nothing! Could you conjure

The memory of my wrongs away, and leave me
No other cause for being what I am
Than that I am so, nothing yet could change me.
Pshaw! death!—Why do I dally thus? Away!
See me no more! no more! Away! Farewell!

Turning away, he starts, and stops.

Fulvius. Ha! Sophronia comes: it stirs him.
Gisippus. My dreams have been of this; my sleep has been
Fear-haunted till this vision came to quiet it,
And then my soul knew peace. O, you have been
My memory's nightly visitant!
Fulvius (*motioning to Sophronia without*). Hush! softly!
Gisippus. Beautiful phantom of my faded hope!
How many thousand thousand scenes of joy,
Not rudely dragg'd from rest,
But quietly awaken'd into light
By the soft magic of that wizard glance,
Rise on my soul, as from the dead!

SOPHRONIA *enters.*

Fulvius. Sophronia!
Sophronia. I am here to seek you: they have told me, Fulvius!
Ha! (*reaching to him her hand*) Gisippus!
Gisippus. Hush! peace, sweet woman! All
Is softening o'er my wounded heart again.
Sophronia! I am glad you do not scorn me.
There is a reconciling influence
About you, in your eyes, air, speech,—a stilling spell
The wrong'd heart can not strive against.
Fulvius. Gisippus! Would you prove that?

GISIPPUS, *his eyes still fixed on* SOPHRONIA, *reaches his hand back to* FULVIUS.

Gisippus. 'Tis not impossible, Fulvius!
Sophronia. Then for my sake, Gisippus!
Gisippus (*embracing Fulvius*). All for thee!

ROBERT BROWNING.

1812—

COLOMBE'S BIRTHDAY.

COLOMBE, *Duchess for a year (since her father's death) finds that her Duchy of Juliers and Cleves is claimed by Prince* BERTHOLD. *The citizens of Cleves, suffering from some oppression and from famine, have deputed a young advocate,* VALENCE, *to plead for them.* COLOMBE, *mistrusting her courtiers, and struck with the truth and earnestness of* VALENCE, *takes him as her privy-councillor, and bids him examine into the Prince's claim.* VALENCE *in secret loves* COLOMBE.

Valence (alone). So must it be! I have examined these
With scarce a palpitating heart,—so calm,
Keeping her image almost wholly off,
Setting upon myself determined watch,
Repelling to the uttermost his claims,
And the result is,—all men would pronounce,
And not I only, the result to be,—
Berthold is Heir; she has no shade of right
To the distinction which divided us,—
But, suffer'd rule first by these Kings and Popes
To serve some Devil's-purpose, now 'tis gained,
To serve some Devil's-purpose must withdraw.
Valence!—This rapture,—selfish can it be?
Eject it from your heart, her home. It stays.
Ah, the brave world that opens to us both!—
Do my poor townsmen so esteem it? Cleves!
I need not your pale faces. This—reward
For service done to them? Too horrible!
I never served them; 'twas myself I served;
Nay! served not, rather saved from punishment
Which, had I fail'd you then, would plague me now.
My life continues yours, and your life mine.
But if, to take God's gift, I swerve no step,—
Cleves! if no prayer I breathe for it, if she,

Footsteps without.

Colombe, that comes now, freely gives herself,
Will Cleves require that, turning thus to her,
I——

Enter Prince BERTHOLD.

Pardon, sir! I had not look'd for you
Till night, i' the Hall; nor have as yet declared
My judgment to the Lady.

Berthold. So I hoped.

Val. And yet I scarce know wherefore that prevents
Disclosing it to you, disclosing even
What she determines.

Berth. That I need not ask.

Val. You need not: I have proved the Lady's mind;
And, justice being to do, dare act for her.

Berth. Doubtless she has a very noble mind.

Val. O, never fear but she'll in each conjuncture
Bear herself bravely! she no whit depends
On circumstance; as she adorns a throne
She had adorn'd——

Berth. A hovel. In what book
Have I read this of every Queen that lived?
A throne? you have not been instructed, sure,
To forestall my request?

Val. 'Tis granted, sir!
My heart instructs me. I have scrutinized
Your claims——

Berth. Ah, claims, you mean, I first preferr'd.
Before our late appointment, sir! I come,
To pray you let those claims at present rest,—
In favour of a new and stronger one.

Val. You shall not need a stronger: on the part
Of the Lady, all you offer I accept,
Since one clear right suffices. Yours is clear.
Propose!

Berth. I offer her my hand!

Val. Your hand?

Berth. A Duke's, yourself say! and at no far time,
Something here whispers me, the Emperor's.
The Lady's mind is noble: which induced
This seizure of occasion ere my claims
Were—settled, let us amicably say!
Val. Your hand!
Berth. (*aside*). He will fall down and kiss it next.
Sir! this astonishment's too flattering;
Nor must you hold your mistress' worth so cheap.
Enhance it rather! urge that blood is blood,—
The daughter of the Burgraves, Landgraves, Markgraves,
Remains their daughter! I shall scarce gainsay.
Elsewhere or here the Lady needs must rule,
Like the Imperial crown's great chrysoprase,
They tell me—somewhat out of keeping there,
And yet no jewel for a meaner cap.
Val. You wed the Duchess?
Berth. Cry you mercy, friend!
The match will influence many fortunes here:
A natural enough solicitude!
Be certain no bad chance it proves for you!
However high you take your present stand,
There's prospect of a higher still remove:
For Juliers will not be my resting-place;
And when I have to choose a substitute,
You need not give your mates a character.
And yet I doubt your fitness to supplant
The grey smooth Chamberlain: he'd hesitate
A doubt his Lady could demean herself
So low as to accept me. Courage, sir!
I like your method better: feeling's play
Is franker much, and flatters me beside.
Val. I am to say you love her?
Berth. Say that too!
Love has no great concernment, thinks the world,
With a Duke's marriage. How go precedents

In Juliers' story? how use Juliers' Dukes?
Yon must be Luitpold, ay! a stalwart sire:
Say I have been arrested suddenly
In my ambition's course,—say, rocky course,—
By this sweet flower; I fain would gather it,
And then proceed;—so say, and speedily,
Nor stand there like Duke Luitpold's brazen self!—
Enough, sir! you possess my mind, I think.
To this claim be it in the Hall to-night
Your Lady's answer comes! till when, farewell! *Exit.*

Val. (*alone*). The heavens and earth stay as they were; my heart
Beats as it beat; the truth remains the truth!
What falls away, if not my faith in her?
Was it my faith, that she could estimate
Love's value,—and, such faith still guiding me,
Dare I to test her now? or had I faith
Solely because no power of test was mine?

Enter the DUCHESS.

Duch. My fate, sir! Ah, you turn away,—all's over!
But you are sorry for me. Be not so!
What I might have become, and never was,
Regret with me! what I have merely been,
Rejoice I am no longer! what I now
Begin, a simple woman now, to be,
Hope that I am! for, now my rights are void,
This heavy roof seems easy to exchange
For the blue sky outside, my lot henceforth.

Val. And what a lot is Berthold's?

Duch. How of him?

Val. He stands, a man now,—stately, strong, and wise,—
One great aim, like a guiding star, before,
Which tasks strength, wisdom, stateliness to follow,
As not its substance but its shine he tracks,
Nor dreams of more than, just evolving these
To fulness, will suffice him to life's end.

After this star, out of a night he springs;
A beggar's cradle for the throne of thrones
He quits, so mounting feels each step he mounts,
Nor, as from each to each exultingly
He passes, overleaps one grade of joy.
This for his own good;—with the world, each gift
Of God and man, Reality, Tradition,
Fancy, and Fact, so well environ him
That as a mystic panoply they serve
Of force, untenanted, to awe mankind,
And work his purpose out with half the world,—
While he, their master, dexterously slipt
From such encumbrance, is meantime employ'd
In his own prowess with the other half.
So shall he go on, every day's success
Adding to what is He a solid strength,
An airy might to what encircles him,
Till at the last, so life's routine shall grow,
That as the Emperor only breathes and moves,
His shadow shall be watch'd, his step or stalk
Become a comfort or a portent, how
He trails his ermine take significance,—
Till even his power shall cease his power to be,
And most his weakness men shall fear, nor vanquish
Their typified invincibility.
So shall he go on, so at last shall end,
The man of men, the spirit of all flesh,
The fiery centre of an earthly world!

Duch. Some such a fortune I had dream'd should rise
Out of my own; that is, above my power
Seem'd other, greater potencies to stretch——

Val. For you?

Duch. It was not I moved there, I think:
But One I could, though constantly beside
And aye approaching, still keep distant from
And so adore. A man 'twas moved there.

Val. Who?
Duch. I felt the spirit, never saw the face.
Val. See it! 'Tis Berthold's. He enables you
To realize your vision.
Duch. Berthold?
Val. Duke,—
Emperor to be! He proffers you his hand.
Duch. Generous and princely!
Val. He is all of this.
Duch. Thanks, Berthold! for my father's sake—no hand
Degrades me.
Val. You accept the proffer'd hand?
Duch. That he should love me!
Val. Loved I did not say.
Had that been, so might love incline the Prince
To the world's good, the world that's at his foot,
I do not know this moment I should dare
Give counsel you refuse the world—and Cleves—
The sacrifice he asks.
Duch. Not love me? sir!
Val. He scarce affirm'd it.
Duch. May not deeds say more?
Val. What does he? Yes! yes! very much he does;
And the shame saved, he thinks; and sorrow saved,
Immitigable sorrow, so he thinks,—
Sorrow that's deeper than we dream, perchance!
Duch. Is not this love?
Val. So very much he does.
For look, you can descend now gracefully:
All doubts are banish'd that the world might have
Or, worst, the doubts yourself in after time
May call up of your heart's sincereness now.
To such reply—"My rule I could have kept,
Increased it to the utmost of my dreams,
Yet abjured all!" This Berthold does for you.
It is munificently much.

Duch. Still, much!
But why is it not love? sir! Answer me!
Val. Because not one of Berthold's words and looks
Had gone with love's presentment of a flower
To the Beloved; because bold confidence,
Open superiority, free pride,
Love owns not,—and were all that Berthold own'd;
Because where reason even finds no flaw
Unerringly a lover's instinct may.
Duch. You reason then, and doubt!
Val. I love, and know.
Duch. You love!—How strange! I never cast a thought
On that. Just see our selfishness! you seem'd
So much my own——I had no ground,—and yet
I never dream'd another might divide
My power with you, much less exceed it.
Val. Lady!
I am yours wholly.
Duch. O no! no! not mine!
'Tis not the same now, never more can be!
Your first love, doubtless! Well, what's gone from me?
What have I lost in you?
Val. My heart replies—
No loss there!—So of Berthold's proposition,
Its obvious magnitude is well to weigh.
Duch. She's—Yes! she must be very fair for you.
Val. I am a simple Advocate of Cleves.
Duch. You! with the heart and brain that so help'd me,
I fancied both exclusively my own,
Yet find are subject to a stronger sway!
She must be,—tell me! is she very fair?
Val. Most fair! beyond conception or belief!
Duch. Black eyes? No matter!—Colombe! the world leads
Its life without you, whom your friends profess'd

The single woman : see how true they were !
One lived this while, and never saw your face
Nor heard your voice, unless——Is she from Cleves ?
Val. Cleves knows her well.
Duch. Ah—just a fancy now !
When you pour'd forth the wrongs of Cleves, I said,—
Thought, that is, afterward——
Val. You thought of me ?
Duch. Of what else ? Only such a cause, I thought,
For such effect—see what true love can do !
Cleves is his love ! I almost fear to ask,
Nor will not ! This is idling.—To our work !
Admit before the Prince without reserve
My claims misgrounded ! Then may follow better——
When you pour'd out Cleve's wrongs impetuously
Was she in your mind ?
Val. All done was done for her——
To humble me !
Duch. She will be proud at least !
Val. She ?
Duch. When you tell her.
Val. That will never be.
Duch. How ? are there sweeter things you hope to tell ?
No, sir ! You counsel'd me ; I counsel you
In the one point I—any woman can.
Your worth, the first thing ; let her own come next,—
Say what you did through her, and she through you ;
The praises of her beauty afterward !
Will you ?
Val. I dare not.
Duch. Dare not !
Val. She I love
Suspects not such a love in me.
Duch. You jest.
Val. The Lady is above me and away.
Not only the brave form and the bright mind

And the great heart combine to press me low,
But all the world calls rank divides us.

Duch. Rank!
Now grant me patience! Here's a man declares
Oracularly in another's case,
Sees the true value and the false for them,—
Nay! bids them see it, and they straight do see;
You call'd my Court's love worthless,—so it turned;
I threw away as dross my heap of wealth,
And here you stickle for a piece or two!
First, has she seen you?

Val. Yes!

Duch. She loves you then!

Val. One flash of hope burst,—then succeeded night,
And all's at darkest now. Impossible!

Duch. We'll try. You are—somehow—my subject yet!

Val. As ever, to the death!

Duch. Obey me then!

Val. I must.

Duch. Approach her and——No! first of all
Get more assurance! My instructress, say!
Was great, descended from a line of kings,
And even fair——Wait why I say this folly!—
She said, of all men none for eloquence,
Courage, and what cast even these to shade,
The heart they sprung from,—none deserved like him
Who saved her at her need,—if she said this,
What should not one I love say?

Val. Heaven—this hope!
O Lady! you are filling me with fire.

Duch. Say this!—nor think I bid you cast aside
One touch of all that awe and reverence!
Nay! make her proud at once to heart's content
That all this wealth of heart and soul's her own!
Think you are all of this, and thinking it—
Obey!—

Val. I can not choose.
Duch. Then kneel to her!

VALENCE *kneels.*

I dream.
Val. Have mercy! Yours, unto the death,
I have obey'd. Despise, and let me die!
Duch. Alas, sir! is it to be ever thus?
Even with you as with the world? I know
This morning's service was no vulgar deed
Whose motive, once it dares avow itself,
Explains all done and infinitely more,
So takes the shelter of a meaner cause,
Whence rising its effects may amply show.
Your service named its true source, loyalty!
The rest's unsaid again. The Duchess bids you
Rise, sir! The Prince's words were in debate.
Val. Rise! Truth, as ever, Lady! comes from you.
I should rise. I, that spoke for Cleves, can speak
For man,—yet tremble now, that stood firm then.
I laugh'd, for 'twas past tears, that Cleves should starve
With all hearts beating loud the infamy,
And no tongue daring trust as much to air,—
Yet here, where all hearts speak, shall I be mute?
O, Lady! for your own sake look on me!
On all I am, and have, and do, heart, brain,
Body and soul, this Valence and his gifts——
I was proud once,—I saw you, and they sank
So that each magnified a thousand times
Were nothing to you,—but such nothingness
What would a crown gild or a sceptre prop,
A treasure speed, a laurel-wreath enhance?
Whât is my own desert? But should your love
Have—there's no language helps here—singled me,
Then—O that wild word, then!—be just to love,
In generosity, its attribute.
Love, as you pleased love! All is clear'd, a stage

For trial of the question kept so long
For you : Is Love or Vanity the best ?
You, solve it for the world's sake ! you, say first
What all will shout one day ! you, vindicate
Our earth and be its angel ! All is said.
Lady ! I offer nothing—I am yours ;
But for the cause' sake, look on me and him
And speak !

Duch. I have received the Prince's message :
Say I prepare my answer !

Val. Take me, Cleves !

Duch. (*alone*). Mournful, that nothing's what it calls itself !
Devotion, zeal, faith, loyalty,—mere love !
And love in question, what may Berthold's be ?
I did ill to mistrust the world so soon—
Already was this Berthold at my side.
The valley-level has its hawks, no doubt :
May not the rock-top have its eagles too ?
Yet Valence——let me see his rival then !

. . . . . .

COLOMBE *surrenders the Duchy.* COLOMBE, BERTHOLD, VALENCE, MELCHIOR, *and* GUIBERT (*Courtiers*). VALENCE *is told that she has accepted the Prince.*

Berth. (*to Valence*). My friend acquaints you, sir !

Val. Prince ! how fortunate are you
Wedding her as you will in spite of it,
To show belief in love ! Let her but love you,
All else you disregard. What else can be ?
You know how love is incompatible
With falsehood,—purifies, assimilates
All other passions to itself.

Melchior. Ay, sir !
But softly ! Where in the object we select
Such love is perchance wanting ?

Val. Then indeed,
What is it you can take ?

Melc. Nay! ask the world!
Youth, beauty, virtue, an illustrious name,
An influence o'er the world.
Val. When man perceives——
Ah! I can only speak as for myself.
Duch. Speak for yourself!
Val. May I? No! I have spoken,
And time's gone by. Had I seen such an one,
As I loved her, weighing thoroughly that word,
So should my task be to evolve her love,—
If for myself,—if for another, well!
Berth. Heroic truly! and your sole reward
The secret pride in yielding up your own?
Val. Who thought upon reward? And yet how much
Comes after! O what amplest recompense!
Is the knowledge of her nought? the memory nought?
Lady! should such an one have look'd on you,
Ne'er wrong yourself so far as quote the world
And say love can go unrequited here!
You will have bless'd him to his whole life's end:
Low passions hinder'd, baser cares kept back,
All goodness cherish'd where you dwelt—and dwell.
What would he have? He has you, you the form,
And you the mind, where self-love made such room
For love of you, he would not serve you now
The vulgar way,—repulse your enemies,
Win you new realms, or best, in saving you
Die blissfully——that's past so long ago!
He wishes you no need, thought, care of him,—
Your good by any means, himself unseen,
Away, forgotten; he gives that life's task up,
As it were——but this charge which I return,
Wishing your good.

Offers the requisition for surrender of the Duchy.

Duch. (*having subscribed it*). And opportunely, sir!
Since at a birthday's close, like this of mine,

Good wishes gentle deeds reciprocate.
Most on a wedding day, as mine is too,
Should gifts go forward. Yours comes first by right.
Ask of me!

Berth. He shall have whate'er he asks,
For his sake and for yours!

Val. (*aside*). If I should ask.
The wither'd bunch of flowers she wears,—perhaps
One last touch of——
(*After a pause.*) Redress the wrongs of Cleves!

Berth. I will, sir!

Duch. (*as Valence would retire*). Nay! do out your duty first!
You bore this paper; I have register'd
My answer to it. Read it, and have done!

VALENCE *reads.*

I take *him;* give up Juliers and the world!
This is my Birth-day.

Melc. Berthold! my one hero
Of the world she gives up, one friend worth my books,
Sole man I think it pays the pains to watch,—
Speak, for I know you through your Popes and Kings!

Berth. Lady! well rewarded! Sir! as well deserved!
I could not imitate; I hardly envy;
I do admire you. All is for the best.
Too costly a flower were you, I see it now,
To pluck and put upon my barren helm,
To wither; any garish plume will do.
I'll not insult you and refuse your rule;
You can so well afford to yield it me,
And I were left without it sadly off.
As it is, for me, if that will flatter you,
A somewhat wearier life seems to remain
Than I thought possible where——'Faith, their life
Begins already: they're too occupied
To listen, and few words content me best.

(*Abruptly to the Courtiers.*) I am your Duke though!
Who obey me here?
Duch. Adolf and Sabine follow us.
Guibert. And I—
Do I not follow them, if I mayn't you?
Shall I not get some little duties up
At Ravenstein, and emulate the rest?
Berth. You happy handful that remain with me—
That is with Dietrich the black Barnabite
I shall leave over you—will earn your wages,
Or Dietrich has forgot to ply his trade.
Meantime, go copy me the precedents
Of every installation, proper styles
And pedigrees of all your Juliers' Dukes,
While I prepare to go on my old way,
And somewhat wearily, I must confess.
Colombe (*with a light joyous laugh as she turns from them*).
Come, Valence! to our friends—God's earth——
Valence. And Thee.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

1819—1875.

THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY.

ELIZABETH *of Hungary, the girl-wife of* LEWIS, *Landgrave of Thuringia, has been taught to believe all joy of life a sin, and torments herself with causeless penance and self-mortification.*

Scene the first, A.D. 1221-7, ELIZABETH'S *Bower; night;* LEWIS *sleeping in an alcove;* ELIZABETH *lying on the floor.*

Eliz. No streak yet in the blank and eyeless East,—
More weary hours to ache and smart and shiver
On these bare boards, within a step of bliss.
Why peevish? 'Tis mine own will keeps me here—
And yet I hate myself for that same will.
Fightings within and out! How easy 'twere now
Just to be like the rest and let life run,

To use up to the rind what joys God sends us,
Not thus forestall His rod! What! and so lose
The strength that comes by suffering? Well, if grief
Be gain, mine's double, fleeing thus the snare
Of yon luxurious and unnerving down,
And widow'd from mine Eden. And why widow'd?
Because, they tell me, love is of the flesh,
And that's our house-bred foe, the adder in our bosoms
Which warm'd to life will sting us. They must know.
I do confess mine ignorance, O Lord!
Mine earnest will these painful limbs may prove.

And yet I swore to love him: so I do
No more than I have sworn. Am I to blame
If God makes wedlock that, which if it be not,
It were a shame for modest lips to speak it,
And silly doves are better mates than we?
And yet our love is Jesus' due,—and all things
Which share with him divided empery
Are snares and idols. To love, to cherish, and to obey!
O deadly riddle! rent and two-fold life!
O cruel troth! To keep thee or to break thee
Alike seems sin. O thou belovèd tempter!
Who first didst teach me love, why on thyself
From God divert thy lesson?

. . . . . .

Alas! he wakes.

Lewis (*rising*). Ah, faithless beauty!
Is this your promise that whene'er you pray'd
I should be still the partner of your vigils
And learn from you to pray? Last night I lay dissembling
When she who woke you took my feet for yours;
Now I shall seize my lawful prize perforce.
Alas! what's this? these shoulders' cushion'd ice
And thin soft flanks with purple lashes all

And weeping furrows traced! Ah, precious life-blood!
Who has done this?

Eliz. Forgive! 'twas I,—my maidens.

Lewis. O ruthless hags!

Eliz. Not so! not so! they wept
When I did bid them, as I bid thee now,
To think of nought but love.

Lewis. Elizabeth!
Speak! I will know the meaning of this madness.

Eliz. Belovèd! thou hast heard how godly souls,
In every age, have tamed the rebel flesh
By such sharp lessons. I must tread their paths
If I would climb the mountains where they rest.
Grief is the gate of bliss. Why, wedlock, knighthood,
A mother's joys, a hard-earn'd field of glory,
By tribulation come,—so doth God's kingdom.

Lewis. But doleful nights and self-inflicted tortures,—
Are these the love of God? Is He well pleased
With this stern holocaust of health and joy?

. . . . . .

She falls under the rule of CONRAD, *a fanatical monk.*

Lewis. Good news, my Princess! In the street below
Conrad, the man of God from Marburg, stands,
And from a bourne-stone to the simple folk
Does thunder doctrine, preaching faith, repentance,
And dread of all foul heresies; his eyes
On heaven still set, save when with searching frown
He lowers upon the crowd who round him cower,
Like quails beneath the hawk, and gape and tremble,—
Now raised to heaven, now down again to hell.
I stood beside, and heard; like any doe's
My heart did rise and fall.

Eliz. O, let us hear him!
We too need warning. Shame, if we let pass
Unentertain'd God's angels on their way!
Send for him, brother!

Lewis. Let a knight go down
And say to the holy man, the Landgrave Lewis
With humble greetings prays his blessedness
To make these secular walls the Spirit's temple
At least to-night!

Eliz. Now go, my ladies, both!
Prepare fit lodgings; let your courtesies
Retain in our poor courts the man of God!

LEWIS *and* ELIZABETH *are left alone.*

Now hear me, best-beloved! I have mark'd this man;
And that which hath scared others draws me tow'rd him.
He has the graces which I want: his sternness
I envy for its strength; his fiery boldness
I call the earnestness which dares not trifle
With life's huge stake; his coldness but the calm
Of one who long hath found, and keeps, unwavering,
Clear purpose still; he hath the gift which speaks
The deepest things most simply; in his eye
I dare be happy, weak I dare not be.
With such a guide to save this little heart
The burden of self-rule, O! half my work
Were eased, and I could live for thee and thine
And take no thought of self. O, be not jealous,
Mine Own! mine Idol! For thy sake I ask it.
I would but be a mate and help more meet
For all thy knightly virtues.

Lewis 'Tis too true!
I have felt it long. We stand, two weakling children,
Under too huge a burden, while temptations,
Like adders, swarm around: I must be led,—
But thou alone shalt lead me.

Eliz. I? Beloved!
This load more? Strengthen, Lord! the feeble knees!

Lewis. Yes! thou, my Queen, who making thyself once mine,
Hast made me seven-fold thine; I own thee guide
Of my devotions, mine ambition's loadstar,

The Saint whose shrine I serve with lance and lute.
If thou wilt have a ruler, let him be
Through thee the ruler of thy slave.

Kneeling to her.

Eliz. O, kneel not!
But grant my prayer! If we shall find this man,
As well I know him, worthy, let him be
Director of my conscience, and my actions
With all but thee! Within love's inner shrine
We shall be still alone. But joy! here comes
Our embassy, successful.

Enter CONRAD, *with* COUNT WALTER, *Monks, Ladies, &c.*

Conrad. Peace to this house!
Eliz. Hail to your holiness!
Lewis. The odour of your sanctity and might
With balmy steam and gales of Paradise
Forestalls you hither.
Eliz. Bless us doubly, master!
With holy doctrine, and with holy prayers!
Con. Children! I am the servant of Christ's servants,
And needs must yield to those who may command
By right of creed. I do accept your bounty,
Not for myself, but for that priceless Name
Whose dread authority and due commission,
Attested by the seal of His vicegerent,
I bear unworthy here. Through my vile lips
Christ and His Vicar thank you. On myself,
And these my brethren, Christ's adopted poor,
A menial's crust and some waste nook or dog-hutch
Wherein the worthless flesh may nightly hide
Are best bestow'd.
Eliz. You shall be where you will,
Do what you will; unquestion'd, unobserved,
Enjoy, refrain; silence and solitude,
The better part which such like spirits choose,

We will provide; only be you our master,
And we your servants, for a few short days!
O blessed days!

Con. Ah! be not hasty, Madam!
Think whom you welcome! one who has no skill
To wink and speak smooth things; whom fear of God
Constrains to daily wrath; who brings, alas!
A sword, not peace; within whose bones the Word
Burns like a pent-up fire, and makes him bold,
If aught in you or yours shall seem amiss,
To cry aloud and spare not. Let me go!
To pray for you, as I have done long time,
Is sweeter than to chide you.

Eliz. Then your prayers
Shall drive home your rebukes. For both we need you.
Our snares are many, and our sins are more:
So say not Nay! I'll speak with you apart.

CONRAD *and* ELIZABETH *retire.*

Lewis. Well, Walter mine! how like you the good Legate?

Walt. Walter has seen nought of him but his eye,
And that don't please him.

Lewis. How so? sir! that face
Is pure and meek,—a calm and thoughtful eye.

Walt. A shallow, stony, steadfast eye, that looks at neither man nor beast in the face, but at something invisible a yard before him, through you and past you at a fascination, a ghost of fixed purposes that haunts him, from which neither reason nor pity will turn him. I have seen such an eye in men possessed—with devils or with self: sleek, passionless men who are too refined to be manly, and measure their grace by their effeminacy;—crooked vermin, who swarm up in pious times, being drowned out of their earthly haunts by the spring-tide of religion, and so, making a gain of godliness, swim upon the first of the flood till it cast them ashore on the firm beach of wealth and station. I always mistrust those wall-eyed saints.

Lewis. Beware, Sir Count! your keen and worldly wit
Is good for worldly uses, not to tilt
Withal at holy men and holy things.
He pleases well the spiritual sense
Of my most peerless lady, whose discernment
Is still the touchstone of my grosser fancy.
He is her friend, and mine; and you must love him
Even for our sakes alone.
(*He turns to a bystander.*) A word with you, sir!

Meanwhile ELIZABETH *and* CONRAD *talk together.*

Eliz. I would be taught.
Con. It seems you claim some knowledge,
By choosing thus your teacher.
Eliz. I would know more.
Con. Go then to the schools—and be no wiser, Madam!
But let God's charge here run to waste, to seek
The bitter fruit of knowledge! hunt the rainbow
O'er hill and dale, while wisdom rusts at home!
Eliz. I would be holy, Master!
Con. Be so then!
God's will stands fair; 'tis thine which fails, if any.
Eliz. I would know how to rule.
Con. Then must thou learn
The needs of subjects, and be ruled thyself.
Sink, if thou long'st to rise! Become most small,
The strength which comes by weakness makes thee great.
Eliz. I will.
Lewis. What! still at lessons? Come, my fairest sister!
Usher the holy man unto his lodgings!
Walt. (*alone*). So! so! the birds are limed. Heaven grant that we do not soon see them stowed in separate cages! Well, here my prophesying ends. I shall go to my lands, and see how much the gentlemen my neighbours have stolen off them the last week. Priests? frogs in the king's bedchamber! What says the song?

I once had a hound, a right good hound,
A hound both fleet and strong;—
He ate at my board and he slept by my bed,
And ran with me all the day long.

But my wife took a priest, a shaveling priest,
And "such friendships are carnal!" quoth he:
So my wife and her priest they drugg'd the poor beast,
And the rats'-bane is waiting for me.

Night. The Gateway of a Convent. CONRAD *waiting.*

Con. This night she swears obedience to me. Wondrous! Lord!
How hast thou open'd a path where my young dreams
May find fulfilment: there are prophecies
Upon her make me bold. Why comes she not?
She should be here by now. Strange, how I shrink,
I who ne'er yet felt fear of man or fiend.
Obedience to my will! an awful charge!
But yet, to have the training of her sainthood;
To watch her rise above this wild world's waves
Like floating water-lily, tow'rd heaven's light
Opening its virgin snows, with golden eye
Mirroring the sun; to be her champion,
And war with fiends for her;—that were a quest!
That were true chivalry! to bring my Judge
This jewel for His crown, this noble soul,
Worth thousand prudish clods of barren clay
Who mope for heaven because earth's grapes are sour,—
Her full of youth, flush'd with the heart's rich first-fruits,
Tangled in earthly pomp and earthly love.
Wife? Saint by her face she should be: with such looks
The Queen of Heaven perchance slow-pacing came
Adown our sleeping wards, when Dominic
Sank fainting, drunk with beauty. She is most fair!
Pooh! I know nought of fairness. This I know:
She calls herself my slave, with such an air
As speaks her queen, not slave. That shall be look'd to.

She must be pinion'd, or she'll range abroad
Upon too bold a wing; 'twill cost her pain,—
But what of that? there are worse things than pain.
What! not yet here? I'll in, and there await her,
In prayer before the altar; I have need on't,—
And shall have more before this harvest's ripe.

As he goes, ELIZABETH, ISENTRUDIS, *and* GUTA, *enter*.

Eliz. I saw him just before us. Let us onward!
We must not seem to loiter.

Isen. Then you promise
Exact obedience to his sole direction
Henceforth in every scruple?

Eliz. In all I can
And be a wife.

Guta. Is it not double bondage?
A husband's will is clog enough. Be sure,
Though free, I crave more freedom.

Eliz. So do I.
This servitude shall free me—from myself.
Therefore I'll swear.

Isen. To what?

Eliz. I know not wholly:
But this I know, that I shall swear to-night
To yield my will unto a wiser will;
To see God's truth through eyes which, like the eagle's,
From higher Alps undazzled eye the sun.
Compell'd to discipline from which my sloth
Would shrink unbidden, to deep devious paths
Which my dull sight would miss; I now can plunge,
And dare life's eddies fearless.

Isen. You'll repent it.

Eliz. I do repent, even now. Therefore I'll swear,
And bind myself to that which, once being right,
Will not be less right when I shrink from it.
No! if the end be gain'd, if I be raised
To freer, nobler use, I'll dare, I'll welcome

Him and his means, though they were racks and flames.
Come, ladies! let us in, and to the chapel!

. . . . . .

A chamber. GUTA, ISENTRUDIS, *and a* LADY.

Lady. Doubtless she is most holy,—but for wisdom:
Say, is it wise to spurn all rules, all censures;
And mountebank it in the public ways
Till she becomes a jest?
Isen. How's this?
Lady. For one thing:
Yest're'en I pass'd her in the open street,
Following the vocal line of chanting priests,
Clad in rough serge, and with her bare soft feet
Wooing the ruthless flints; the gaping crowd,
Unknowing whom they held, did thrust and jostle
Her tender limbs; she saw me as she pass'd,—
And blush'd, and veil'd her face, and smiled withal.
Isen. O think, she's not seventeen yet.

. . . . . .

The husband, half in desperation, takes the Cross, to go to the Holy Land. He has just told and left her when CONRAD *enters.*

Eliz. You know, sir! that my husband has taken the Cross?
Con. I do. All praise to God!
Eliz. But none to you,
Hard-hearted! Am I not enough your slave?
Can I obey you more when he is gone
Than now I do? Wherein, pray, has he hinder'd
This holiness of mine, for which you make me
Old ere my womanhood?
(*To him, going.*) Stay, sir! and tell me
Is this the out-come of your father-care?
Was't not enough to poison all my joys
With foulest scruples? show me nameless sins
Where I, unconscious babe, bless'd God for all things?
But you must thus intrigue away my knight

And plunge me down this gulf of widowhood!
And I not twenty yet,—a girl, an orphan,
That can not stand alone! Was I too happy?
O God! what lawful bliss do I not buy
And balance with the smart of some sharp penance?
Hast thou no pity? none? Thou drivèst me
To fiendish doubts. Thou Jesus' messenger?

Con. This to your master?

Eliz. This to any one
Who dares to part me from my Love!

Con. 'Tis well!
In pity to your weakness I must deign
To do what ne'er I did,—excuse myself.
I say, I knew not of your husband's purpose.
God's Spirit, not I, moved him. Perhaps I sinn'd
In that I did not urge it myself.

Eliz. Thou traitor!
So thou wouldst part us?

Con. Aught that makes thee greater
I'll dare. This very outburst proves in thee
Passions unsanctified and carnal leanings
Upon the creatures thou would'st fain transcend.
Thou badest me cure thy weakness. Lo! God brings thee
The tonic cup I fear'd to mix. Be brave!
Drink it to the lees, and thou shalt find within
A pearl of price!

Eliz. 'Tis bitter!

Con. Bitter, truly:
Even I, to whom the storm of earthly love
Is but a dim remembrance——Courage! courage!
Give up thy Noblest on the noblest service
God's sun has look'd on since the chosen Twelve
Went conquering and to conquer! If he fall——

Eliz. O spare mine ears!

Con. He falls a blessed martyr,
To bid thee welcome through the Gates of Pearl;

And next to his shall thine own guerdon be,
If thou devote him willing to thy God.
Wilt thou?

Eliz. Have mercy!

Con. Wilt thou? Sit not thus
Watching the sightless air! No angel in it
But asks thee what I ask; the Fiend alone
Delays the coward flesh. Wilt thou devote him?

Eliz. I will devote him: a crusader's wife!
I'll glory in it. Thou speak'st words from God,—
And God shall have him! Go now, good my master!
My poor brain swims.

CONRAD *quits her.*

Yes—a crusader's wife!—and a crusader's widow!

Bursts into tears and dashes herself on the floor.

. . . . . .

The end. ELIZABETH *lying on straw in a poor hovel: a crowd of women around her.* CONRAD *entering.*

Conrad. As I expected:
A sermon-mongering herd about her death-bed,
Stifling her with fusty sighs, as flocks of rooks
Dispatch with pious pecks a wounded brother.
Cant, howl, and whimper! Not an old fool in the town
Who thinks herself religious, but must see
The last of the show, and mob the deer to death.
(*Advancing.*) Hail, holy ones! how fares your charge today?

Abbess. After the blessed sacrament received,
As surfeited with those celestial viands
And with the blood of life intoxicate,
She lay entranced; and only stirr'd at times
To eructate sweet edifying doctrine
Cull'd from your darling sermons.

Woman. Heavenly grace
Imbues her so throughout that even when prick'd
She feels no pain.

Con. A miracle, no doubt!
Heaven's work is ripe; and, like some more I know,
Having begun in the spirit, in the flesh
She's now made perfect. She hath had warnings too
Of her decease; and prophesied to me,
Three weeks ago when I lay like to die,
That I should see her in her coffin yet.
Abbess. 'Tis said, she heard in dreams her Saviour call her
To mansions built for her from everlasting.
Con. Ay! so she said.
Abbess. But tell me, in her confession
Was there no holy shame, no self-abhorrence
For the vile pleasures of her carnal wedlock?
Con. She said no word thereon. As for her shrift,
No Chrysom child could show a chart of thoughts
More spotless than were hers.
A Nun. Strange she said nought!
I had hoped she had grown more pure.
Con. When next I ask'd her
How she would be interr'd,—"In the vilest weeds,"
Quoth she,—"my poor hut holds; I will not pamper,
When dead, that flesh which living I despised.
And for my wealth, see it to the last doit
Bestow'd upon the poor of Christ!"
Second Woman. O grace!
Third. O soul to this world poor, but rich tow'rd God!
Eliz. (*awaking*). Hark, how they cry for bread!
Poor souls! be patient! I have spent all——
I'll sell myself for a slave—feed them with the price.
Come Guta! nurse! we must be up and doing.
Alas! they are gone, and begging!——
Go! go! they'll beat me if I give you aught.
I'll pray for you, and so you'll go to heaven:
I am a saint,—God grants me all I ask,—
But I must love no creature. Why? Christ loved:
Mary he loved, and Martha, and their brother:

Three friends, and I have none!
When Lazarus lay dead, He groan'd in spirit,
And wept—like any widow,—Jesus wept!
I'll weep, weep, weep; pray for that gift of tears.
They took my friends away, but not my eyes,
O husband! babes! friends! nurse!—To die alone!
Crack, frozen brain! melt, icicle within!

Women. Alas, sweet saint! by bitter pangs she wins
Her crown of endless glory!

Con. But she wins it!
Stop that vile sobbing! she's unmann'd enough
Without your maudlin sympathy.

Eliz. What! weeping?
Daughters of Jerusalem! weep not for me,—
Weep for yourselves!

Women. We do: alas! we do.
What are we without you?

Woman (*after a pause*). O listen! listen!
What sweet sounds from her fast-closed lips are welling,
As from the cavern'd shaft deep miners' songs.

Eliz. (*murmuring*). Through the stifling room
Floats strange perfume;
Through the crumbling thatch
The angels watch
Over the rotting roof-tree.
They warble, and flutter, and hover, and glide,
Wafting old sounds to my dreary bedside,—
Snatches of songs which I used to know
When I slept by my nurse, and the swallows
Call'd me at day-dawn from under the eaves.
Hark to them! hark to them now,
Fluting like woodlarks, tender and low—
Cool rustling leaves—tinkling waters—
Sheep-bells over the lea——
In their silver plumes Eden gales whisper—
In their hands Eden-lilies—not for me—not for me—

No crown for the poor fond bride!
The song told me so
Long, long ago:
How the maid chose the white lily;
But the bride, she chose
The red red rose,
And by its thorn died she.
Well, in my Father's house are many mansions.
I have trodden the waste howling ocean-foam
Till I stand upon Canaan's shore
Where Crusaders from Zion's towers call me home
To the Saints who are gone before.

Conrad (*aside*). Still on Crusaders!

Abbess. What was that sweet song which just now, my Princess!
You murmur'd to yourself?

Eliz. Did you not hear
A little bird between me and the wall
That sang and sang?

Abbess. We heard him not, fair Saint!

Eliz. I heard him, and his merry carol revel'd
Through all my brain, and woke my parched throat
To join his song; then angel melodies
Burst through the dull dark, and the mad air quiver'd
Unutterable music. Nay! you heard him.

Abbess. Nought save yourself.

Eliz. Slow hours! Was that the cock-crow?

Woman. St. Peter's bird did call.

Eliz. Then I must up,
To matins and to work. No! my work's over.
And what is it?—what?
One drop of oil on the salt seething ocean.
Thank God that One was born at the same hour,
Who did our work for us: we'll talk of Him:
We shall go mad with thinking of ourselves.
We'll talk of Him, and of that new-made star

Which, as he stoop'd into the Virgin's side,
From off his finger, like a signet-gem,
He dropp'd in the empyrean for a sign.
But the first tear he shed at his birth-hour,
When he crept weeping forth to see our woe,
Fled up to heaven in mist, and hid for ever
Our sins, our works, and that same new-made star.

Woman. Poor soul! she wanders.

Con. Wanders! Fool! her madness
Is worth a million of your "paters," mumbled
At every station between——

Eliz. O! thank God
Our eyes are dim! What should we do, if he,
The sneering Fiend, who laughs at all our toil,
Should meet us face to face?

Con. We'd call him fool.

Eliz. There! there! Fly, Satan! fly!—'Tis gone!

Con. The victory's gain'd at last.
The Fiend is baffled, and her saintship sure!
O people bless'd of heaven!

Eliz. O master! master!
You will not let the mob, when I am dead,
Make me a show—paw over all my limbs—
Pull out my hair—pluck off my finger-nails,—
Wear scraps of me for charms and amulets,
As if I were a mummy, or a drug?
As they have done to others,—I have seen it;—
Nor set me up in ugly naked pictures
In every church, that cold world-harden'd wits
May gossip o'er my secret tortures? Promise!
Swear to me! I demand it!

Con. No man lights
A candle to be hid beneath a bushel.
Thy virtues are the Church's dower: endure
All which the edification of the faithful
Makes needful to be publish'd!

Eliz. O my God!
I have stripp'd myself of all but modesty:
Dost thou claim yet that victim?—Be it so!
Now take me home! I have no more to give thee!—
So weak, and yet no pain,—why, now nought ails me.
How dim the lights burn! Here——
Where are the children? Alas! I had forgotten.
Now I must sleep,—for ere the sun shall rise
I must begone upon a long long journey
To him I love.
Con. She means her heavenly bridegroom,
The spouse of souls.
Eliz. I said, to him I love.
Let me sleep—sleep! You will not need to wake me.
So—good night!

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

1837—

CHASTELARD.

MARY BEATON, *one of the queen's ladies, loves* CHASTELARD, *who loves and is loved by the Queen.* MARY BEATON *promises to arrange a night-meeting for him with the Queen, but meets him herself.*

Night. In MARY BEATON'S *chamber.*

Chast. I am not certain yet she will not come:
For I can feel her hand's heat still in mine,
Past doubting of; and see her brows half-drawn,
And half a light in the eyes. If she come not,
I am no worse than he that dies to-night:
This two years' patience gets an end at least.
Whichever way I am well done with it.
How hard the thin sweet moon is, split and laced
And latticed over, just a stray of it
Catching and clinging at a strip of wall,
Hardly a hand's breadth! Did she turn indeed

In going out? not to catch up her gown
The page let slip, but to keep sight of me?
There was a soft small stir beneath her eyes,
Hard to put on; a quivering of her blood,
That knew of the old nights watch'd out wakefully.
Those measures of her dancing too were changed,—
More swift, and with more eager stops at whiles
And rapid pauses where breath fail'd her lips.

Enter MARY BEATON.

O, she is come! If you be she indeed
Let me but hold your hand! What! no word yet?
You turn and kiss me without word. O Sweet!
If you will slay me be not overquick!
Kill me with some slow heavy kiss that plucks
The heart out at the lips! Alas, sweet Love!
Give me some old sweet word to kiss away!—
Is it a jest? for I can feel your hair
Touch me; I may embrace your body too?
I know you well enough without sweet words.
How should one make you speak?—This is not she.
Come in the light! nay! let me see your eyes!
Ah, you it is! What have I done to you?
And do you look now to be slain for this,
That you twist back and shudder like one stabb'd?

Beat. Yea! kill me now, and do not look at me!
God knows I mean'd to die. Sir! for God's love,
Kill me now quick ere I go mad with shame!

Chast. Cling not upon my wrists! let go the hilt!
Nay! you will bruize your hand with it. Stand up!
You shall not have my sword forth.

Beat. Kill me now!
I will not rise: there, I am patient, see!
I will not strive: but kill me, for God's sake!

Chast. Pray you rise up, and be not shaken so!
Forgive me my rash words! my heart was gone

After the thing you were. Be not ashamed!
Give me the shame! you have no part in it.
Can I not say a word shall do you good?
Forgive that too!

Beat. I shall run crazed with shame;
But when I felt your lips catch hold on mine,
It stopp'd my breath: I would have told you all.
Let me go out! you see I lied to you,
And I am shamed. I pray you, loose me, sir!
Let me go out!

Chast. Think no base things of me!
I were most base to let you go ashamed.
Think my heart's love and honour go with you;
Yea! while I live, for your love's noble sake,
I am your servant in what wise may be,
To love and serve you with right thankful heart.

Beat. I have given men leave to mock me, and must bear
What shame they please: you have good cause to mock.
Let me pass now!

Chast. You know I mock you not.
If ever I leave off to honour you,
God give me shame! I were the worst churl born.

Beat. No marvel though the Queen should love you too,
Being such a knight. I pray you, for her love,
Lord Chastelard! of your great courtesy,
Think now no scorn to give me my last kiss
That I shall have of man before I die!
Even the same lips you kiss'd and knew not of
Will you kiss now, knowing the shame of them,
And say no one word to me afterwards,—
That I may see I have loved the best lover
And man most courteous of all men alive?

Mary Seyton (*within*). Here! fetch the light! Nay! this way! Enter all!

Beat. I am twice undone. Fly! get some hiding, sir!
They have spied upon me somehow.

Chast. Nay! fear not!
Stand by my side!

Enter MARY SEYTON *and* MARY HAMILTON.

Ham. Give me that light! This way!
Chast. What jest is here? fair ladies! it walks late.
Something too late for laughing.
Seyt. Nay! fair sir!
What jest is this of yours? Look to your lady!
She is nigh swoon'd. The Queen shall know all this.
Ham. A grievous shame it is we are fallen upon;
Hold forth the light! Is this your care of us?
Nay! come, look up! this is no game, God wot.
Chast. Shame shall befall them that speak shamefully.
I swear this lady is as pure and good
As any maiden; and who believes me not
Shall keep the shame for his part, and the lie.
To them that come in honour and not in hate
I will make answer. Lady! have good heart!
Give me the light there! I will see you forth.

. . . . . .

CHASTELARD *has been found in the Queen's chamber. He is sentenced to death, the Queen consenting, that she may save her reputation. At the time of his execution,* MARY BEATON *and* MARY CARMICHAEL *are in an upper room at Holyrood, overlooking the place;* MARY CARMICHAEL *at the window.*

Beat. Do you see nothing?
Car. Nay! but swarms of men
And talking women together in small space,
Flapping their gowns, and gaping with fools' eyes;
And a thin ring round one that seems to speak,
Holding his hands out eagerly: no more.
Beat. Why, I hear more: I hear men shout The Queen!
Car. Nay! no cries yet.
Beat. Ah! they will cry out soon,
When she comes forth; they should cry Out on her;
I heard them crying in my heart. Nay! Sweet!

Do not you hate her? All men, if God please,
Shall hate her one day; yea! one day no doubt
I shall worse hate her.

Car. Pray you, be at peace!
You hurt yourself. She will be merciful.
What! could you see a true man slain for you?
I think I could not; it is not like our hearts
To have such hard sides to them.

Beat. O, not you;
And I could no wise. There's some blood in her
That does not run to mercy as ours doth.
That fair face and the cursèd heart in her,
Made keener than a knife for manslaying,
Can bear strange things.

Car. Peace! for the people come.
Ah! Murray, hooded over half his face
With pluck'd-down hat, few folk about him, eyes
Like a man anger'd; Darnley after him,
Holding our Hamilton above her wrist,
His mouth put near her hair to whisper with,—
And she laughs softly, looking at his feet.

Beat. She will not live long; God hath given her
Few days and evil, full of hate and love:
I see well now.

Car. Hark! there's their cry—"The Queen!"
"Fair life and long, and good days to the Queen!"

Beat. Yea! but God knows. I feel such patience here
As I were sure in a brief while to die.

Car. She bends, and laughs a little, graciously,
And turns half, talking to I know not whom—
A big man with great shoulders; ah! the face,
You get his face now, wide and duskish, yea!
The youth burnt out of it. A goodly man,
Thew'd mightily, and sun-burnt to the bone;
Doubtless he was away in banishment,
Or kept some March far off.

Beat. Still you see nothing?
Car. Yea! now they bring him forth with a great noise,
The folk all shouting, and men thrust about
Each way from him.
Beat. Ah, Lord God! bear with me;
Help me to bear a little with my love,
For thine own love, or give me some quick death!
Do not come down! I shall get strength again,
Only my breath fails. Looks he sad or blithe?
Not sad I doubt yet.
Car. Nay! not sad a whit,
But like a man who losing gold or lands
Should lose a heavy sorrow; his face set,
The eyes not curious to the right or left,
And reading in a book, his hands unbound,
With short fleet smiles. The whole place catches breath,
Looking at him; she seems at point to speak.
Now she lies back, and laughs, with her brows drawn,
And her lips drawn too. Now they read his crime—
I see the laughter tightening her chin.
Why do you bend your body and draw breath?
They will not slay him in her sight: I am sure
She will not have him slain.
Beat. Forth! and fear not!
I was just praying to myself—one word,
A prayer I have to say for her to God
If he will mind it.
Car. Now he looks her side;
Something he says, if one could hear thus far:
She leans out, lengthening her throat to hear,
And her eyes shining.
Beat. Ah, I had no hope:
Yea! thou, God! knowest that I had no hope.
Let it end quickly!
Car. Now his eyes are wide,
And his smile great; and like another smile

The blood fills all his face. Her cheek and neck
Work fast and hard ; she must have pardon'd him,
He looks so merrily. Now he comes forth
Out of that ring of people and kneels down ;
Ah ! how the helve and edge of the great axe
Turn in the sunlight as the man shifts hands—
It must be for a show : because she sits
And hardly moves her head this way,—I see
Her chin and lifted lips. Now she stands up,
Puts out her hand, and they fall muttering ;
Ah !

Beat. It is done now ?

Car. For God's love, stay there !
Do not look out ! Nay ! he is dead by this ;
But gather up yourself from off the floor !
Will she die too ? I shut mine eyes and heard—
Sweet ! do not beat your face upon the ground !
Nay ! he is dead and slain.

Beat. What ! slain indeed ?
I knew he would be slain. Ay ! through the neck :
I knew one must be smitten through the neck
To die so quick : if one were stabb'd to the heart,
He would die slower.

Car. Will you behold him dead ?

Beat. Yea ! must a dead man not be look'd upon
That living one was fain of ? Give me way !
Lo you ! what sort of hair this fellow had ;
The doomsman gathers it into his hand
To grasp the head by for all men to see.
I never did that.

Car. For God's love, let me go !

Beat. I think sometimes she must have held it so,
Holding his head back, see you ! by the hair
To kiss his face, still lying in his arms.
Ay ! go and weep : it must be pitiful
If one could see it. What is this they say ?

"So perish the Queen's traitors!" Yea! but so
Perish the Queen! God! do thus much to her
For his sake only; yea! for pity's sake
Do thus much with her!

Car. Prithee, come in with me!
Nay! come at once!

Beat. If I should meet with her
And spit upon her at her coming in——
But if I live, then shall I see one day,
When God will smite her lying harlot's mouth—
Surely I shall. Come! I will go with you;
We will sit down together face to face
Now, and keep silence; for this life is hard,
And the end of it is quietness at last.
Come, let us go! here is no word to say.

An Usher. Make way there for the Lord of Bothwell! room—
Place for my Lord of Bothwell next the Queen!

NOTES.

CHAUCER. Our great poet's greatest work, the *Canterbury Tales*, may be briefly described. He finds himself at the Tabard (of late time the Talbot Inn) in Southwark, on an evening when some twenty-nine persons, men and women, assemble there with intent to go on pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas a-Becket at Canterbury. The host offers to be their conductor, and suggests, as an amusement during their journey, that each pilgrim shall tell two tales; the best teller to be rewarded with a free supper on their return. Of these tales we have twenty-four, all that Chaucer wrote. They afford, says Mr. Marsh (in his *Origin and History of the English Language*)—"probably the first instance of the exhibition of unquestionable dramatic genius in either the Gothic or the Romance languages," the first in which there is shown "such power of conceiving and sustaining individual character as to prove that its author could have furnished the *personnel* of a respectable play. Chaucer therefore may fairly be said to be not only the earliest dramatic genius of modern Europe, but to have been a dramatist before that which is technically known as the existing drama had been invented."

Our text is word for word with Chaucer's, only the spelling modernized where that could be done without injury to rhyme or rhythm. For the sake of Chaucer's perfect music, such words as *weren*, *tellen*, *holden*, *riden* (for *were*, *tell*, *hold*, *ride*) need to be retained; and the reader should observe the old French accent on the final è, as in *talè*, *ofiè*, *croppès;* and in such words as *honoùr*, *conditiòn*, *servànts*, etc. Beyond this, Chaucer's language, with little more of glossary than is required for Burns, will be clear enough to the understanding and appreciation of the general reader.

GLOSSARY.—*Achate*, *achatours*—buying, buyers; *affile*—sharpen, pol-

ish ; *ale-stake*—ale-house sign ; *alther*—all of us ; *anlace*—knife or dagger ; *arrierage*—arrears.

Beforne—before ; *beggestere*—a female beggar ; *the bord bygone*—overgone the border ; *boot*—remedy ; *bracer*—armour or protection for the arm ; *burdoun*—burden, refrain ; *but-if*—unless.

Carp—converse ; *chapelaine*—chaplain (probably here should be *chamberlain*) ; *in chevauchie*—on raids ; *chevysaunce*—profit ; *Christopher*—an image of the Saint ; *cleped*—called ; *comptour*—auditor of accounts ; *courtepy*—an overcoat ; *coverchiefs*—kerchiefs ; *covine*—deceit ; *culpons*—coupons, parcels.

Dais—the high end of a room, as a quarter-deck ; *del*—bit ; *despitous*—spiteful ; *digne*—worthy ; *disport*—sport ; *dooms*—judgment.

Eased—accommodated ; *eke*—also ; *elles, ellis*—else ; *envined*—wine-stored ; *erst*—before.

Falding—a sort of coarse cloth ; *farsed*—stuffed ; *farthing*—least thing ; *featously*—neatly ; *ferne-hallows couthe*—ancient saints known ; *forpined*—wasted ; *fortunen*—make good ; *fother*—a load ; *franklin*—a well-to-do freeman.

Gaf—gave ; *galingale*—a herb ; *gepoun*—a short cassock ; *gipser*—a pouch or purse ; *gnarr*—muscular ; *gobbet*—morsel ; *golyardeys*—a buffoon ; *grope*—test or try ; *grys*—a grey fur.

Habergeon—coat of mail ; *harborough*—harbour, lodging ; *harlot*—fellow ; *harre*—hinge ; *hent*—get, held ; *hight*—called ; *hine*—hind ; *holt*—wood or grove.

Ilke—certain ; *infect*—tainted or questioned.

Japes—tricks ; *jangler*—babbler.

Latoun—plates or plated ; *lazar*—leper, beggar ; *leste*—liking, desire, pleased ; *Lettow*—Lithuania (*Grenade*—Grenada, *Lieys*—in Armenia, *the Great Sea*—the Mediterranean) ; *lewed, lewd*—low, common ; *liefer*—rather ; *limitour*—a begging friar ; *lite*—little ; *lodemenage*—lead-menage, pilotage ; *love-days*—days for arbitration of differences ; *luce*—a trout ; *luste*—like, liked.

Manciple—a steward ; *mary*—marrow ; *mew*—coop ; *mo*—more ; *mortrews*—a kind of thick soup or pottage ; *mort-mal*—a cancer ; *motely*—motley ; *muchel*—much.

Nas—was not ; *ne*—not ; *nightertale*—night time ; *the nones*—then once ; *nose-thurles*—nostrils ; *n'ot*—know not ; *nouthe*—now.

Oxenford—Oxford.

Pace—pass ; *parishions*—parishioners ; *parvys*—the church porch, where lawyers met in consultation ; *pers*—sky-blue ; *piled*—thin ; *pillow-*

beer—a pillow-case; *plein*—full; *plein by rote*—fully repeat; *pommely*—dappled, spotted like an apple; *poraille*—poor folk; *powder merchant*—some spice; *practisour*—practitioner; *pricasour*—pricker-sore, a hard rider; *pricking*—riding; *purfiled*—embroidered.

Ram—given as a prize for wrestling; *raught*—reached; *reccheless*—without a cure; *rede*—adviser; *reeve*—bailiff; *rouncy*—a nag, a hackney.

Sauceflem—pimpled; *scheeldes*—crowns; *seche*—seek; *sendal*—a thin silk; *seynt*—a girdle; *sikerly*—surely; *sithes*—times; *skalled*—scald; *smale*—small; *solemn*—festive, important; *solemnly*—pompously; *Sompnour*—a summoner of offenders to the ecclesiastical courts; *steep*—bright; *stew*—a fish-pond; *swinke, swinker*—labour, labourer; *swoote*—sweet.

Tabard—a smock-frock (like a herald's coat); *taffeta*—silk; *tapiser*—upholsterer; *tappestere*—bar-maid; *thilke*—this; *thries*—thrice; *thumb of gold*—thumb quick at testing the meal (a proverb); *tippet*—or hood; *tollen*—take toll; *tretys*—well-proportioned; *twynne*—go.

Unces—in strips.

Vavasour—a small landholder; *venery*—hunting; *Vernicle*—a diminutive of Veronica (the true image), the portrait of Christ on a handkerchief; *viage*—voyage or journey; *vitaille*—victual.

Wastel-bread—cake; *wend*—go; *whilome*—formerly; *wimple*—neck-kerchief; *wist*—guessed, knew; *wonderly delivir*—wonderfully agile; *wone*—habit; *wonning*—dwelling; *wood*—mad.

Y-chaped—adorned with plates; *yeddings*—songs; *yerde*—yard, wand, or cane; *y-fall*—fallen; *y-run*—run; *y-shave*—shaven; *y-shrive*—confessed; *y-writ*—written.

SKELTON. "A goodly Interlude and a merry," Skelton calls this play of *Magnificence*. An Interlude was a performance between whiles at entertainments—so the name may be here applied; but more properly it may be called a Morality, a term used to distinguish this class of allegories from the Mysteries, or Miracle Plays, founded upon Bible history, first brought out by the clergy for the edification of the people. The personages of the Moralities were mere abstractions; in the later Interludes something of individual character appeared.

Skelton's Morality, known to have been in existence in 1523, was probably written toward the end of the reign of Henry the Seventh, while he was tutor to the prince, afterward Henry the Eighth. He wrote also an Interlude of *Virtue;* a comedy—*Achademios;* and *Nigromansir* (the

Necromancer); all of which are lost. Under Henry the Eighth he was poet-laureate; and a vigorous satirist of the arrogance and wealth of the higher clergy.

Popping is prating. A popping fool, as a poppin-jay; *but-if*—unless; *hele*—health.

HEYWOOD. John Heywood's Interludes are strictly such; and form almost a class by themselves. His *Mery Play between Johan Johan the Husbonde, Tyb his Wyfe, and Syr Jhon the Priest* was printed in 1533. To about the same date may be assigned his other interludes: *the Four P's*, the *Play of the Weather*, and another merry play of *the Pardoner and the Friar, the Curate and neighbour Pratte.* A good Catholic, in high favour with Henry the Eighth and Queen Mary, he was none the less opposed to the impositions of the begging Friars and Pardoners, whom he ridicules in his plays in a manner not noticed as irreverent in those days.

UDALL. For Nicholas Udall, master first of Eton and then of Westminster School, is claimed the honour of having written the first English comedy: an only copy found so late as 1818, now in the Library of Eton. It seems to have been printed in 1566; but is quoted in 1551, preceding by several years the supposed first comedy, *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, attributed to Bishop Still. Udall so early as 1532 also was concerned in a dramatic pageant to celebrate the entrance of Anne Boleyn into London, on occasion of her marriage.

A Roister Doister is a mad-brained fellow.

LYLY. The author of *Euphues* wrote also several plays, chiefly on classical subjects: the *Woman in the Moon*, before 1584; *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, about the same date; *Endimion*, 1591; *Gallathea*, 1592; and "a pleasant conceited comedie" called *Mother Bombie.* His dramas were mostly written for Court entertainments.

KYD. There is nothing to record of Kyd, except his death, stated to be in 1594, and the date of this tragedy, perhaps, 1588. Lamb thinks he sees the work of Webster in the scene here given.

MARLOWE. Of "the mighty line." He first, in his *Tamburlain the Great*, 1587, introduced blank verse upon the stage. "There is no variety of rhythm in Shakespeare," says Collier, "not found in the works of Marlowe," whose early death, in a tavern quarrel, took place before

the greatest dramatist "had written an original play." Marlowe's grandest works are the two tragedies of *Doctor Faustus*, 1588, and *Edward the Second*, 1590. He also wrote the *Jew of Malta*, the *Massacre of Paris*, and *Dido*.

GREENE. "The honourable history of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, showing forth their dealings with magic and with devils, with some account of Bacon's magic mirror and of the Brazen Head from which he would have learned how to wall England round with brass." Taken from a "famous historie of Fryer Bacon" (prose); a love-story interwoven with the friars' pranks, for the sake of farther interest. Performed in 1591. In a later scene than that in our text one of Bacon's devils carries away on his back the discarded Miles, who goes off quite contentedly, being promised that he shall be a tapster below, as "Hell is a hot place, and men are marvelously dry." They go out, Miles booted and spurred, and "the devil roaring." Probably, says Collier, the Devil's last appearance on the stage.

PORTER. No dates can be given of Porter's birth or death. He is said to have been "of considerable reputation;" but except this one play nothing of his production remains.

DEKKER. The *Shoemakers' Holiday*, or *the Gentle Craft*, has been mistakenly attributed to Dr. Barton Holyday, who was but a child at the time of its production, in 1599. Dekker wrote also *Old Fortunatus; Patient Grissil*, with Chettle and Haughton; the *Virgin Martyr*, with Massinger; and in other plays with Webster, Middleton, Ford, and Day.

SHAKESPEARE. Professor Delius gives the following as dates of our plays: *Romeo and Juliet*, 1592 (dated later by Collier); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1595; *Othello*, 1604; *King Lear*, 1604-5; *Macbeth*, 1606; *The Tempest*, 1611.

JONSON. "Rare Ben," most learned of all the playwrights. His principal works are *Every Man in his Humour*, 1598—*Volpone* or *The Fox*, 1605—*The Alchemist*, 1610—*Bartholomew Fair*—all comedies; *Sejanus* and *Cataline*—tragedies; *Poetaster*—a comical satire; and *the Sad Shepherd*—a pastoral drama found after his death. Besides these named and other plays, he wrote numerous masques.

CHAPMAN. Another of Shakespeare's great contemporaries. His first play, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, was published in 1594, and he is spoken of in 1598 as a praiseworthy tragic and comic writer. During the next seven years he was probably occupied with his *Translations* of Homer. His best comedy, *Eastward Hoe*, in which he was assisted by Jonson and Marston, is dated 1605; *Bussy d'Ambois*, a tragedy, 1607; *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, 1613; *Cæsar and Pompey*, 1631. Two plays of *Byron's Conspiracy*, and others were produced by him in the intervening years.

WEBSTER. The date of Webster's birth is unknown, of his death uncertain; and scarcely anything is known of his life. Yet for intensity of imagination he ranks among our highest dramatists after Shakespeare. His most notable plays are *The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona*, 1612; and *The Duchess of Malfy*, 1616.

MIDDLETON. Dodsley, in his *Old Plays*, gives a list of thirteen comedies and three tragedies, some by Middleton alone, some in conjunction with Rowley, Dekker, and Jonson.

ROWLEY. "Died after 1637" is the nearest we have to his date. Four plays by him are extant, besides those in which he assisted or was assisted by other writers.

HEYWOOD. "The model of a light and rapid talent"—says Tieck. Lamb calls him "a prose Shakespeare." The most productive of English dramatists, though not to be compared with Lope de Vega, the Spaniard, the author of "at least fifteen hundred plays." Thomas Heywood wrote only two hundred and twenty. But he also wrote Lord Mayors' pageants; dialogues; prologues and epilogues for other dramatists; some books of history concerning women; an heroic poem, *Great Britain's Troy; Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels; Apology for Actors;* a *Life of Ambrosius Merlin;* and at least began a series of the Lives of all the Poets, British and Foreign. Only twenty-five of his plays have come down to us.

FLETCHER AND BEAUMONT. Fletcher the elder and principal writer. Seventeen plays are credited to their joint authorship; Darley however restricts the number to nine, leaving the rest to Fletcher. *The Maid's Tragedy* is their greatest work. Beaumont seems to have done nothing certainly independent of Fletcher. Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* stands

alone as a pastoral comedy. In the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, and also in a lost play, Shakespeare is said to have had a hand; and Fletcher's name is also associated with Jonson, Middleton, Field, and Massinger. As dramatists Darley would place Beaumont and Fletcher "next below Shakespeare;" or rather, he more justly adds, only "better theatrical writers" than Jonson, Webster, and Ford.

FORD, says Lamb, "was of the first order of poets. He sought for sublimity, not by parcels in metaphors or visible images, but directly where she has her full residence, in the heart of man, in the actions and sufferings of the greatest minds. There is a grandeur of the soul above mountains, seas, and the elements." Of the catastrophe in *The Broken Heart*, he says—he knows not where to find one "so grand, so solemn, and so surprising." This is Ford's greatest work. Not far inferior his other plays, *Love's Sacrifice*, *The Lover's Melancholy*, and a right Shakespearian chronicle of *Perkin Warbeck*. In the *Witch of Edmonton* he helped, or was helped by Dekker and Rowley.

MASSINGER. His first comedy, *The Woman's Plot*, was acted at Court in 1621. *The Virgin Martyr*, by him and Dekker, was probably earlier. Besides the *New Way to Pay Old Debts*, which has kept the stage, he wrote *The Bondman*, *The Roman Actor*, *The Maid of Honour*, *The Fatal Dowry* (with Field), and other plays still extant. But more than fifty of his plays have been lost, only the titles of a few remaining. His genius is rather of the rhetorical order. For the admirable *Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt*, in this year 1883 first printed from a MS. in the British Museum, we are indebted to Mr. Arthur H. Bullen, who assigns the play to the joint composition of Massinger and Fletcher: the concluding scene most probably by Fletcher. Barnavelt was executed in May, 1619; and the play "must have been written immediately afterwards." For particulars of Barnavelt's history the reader is referred to his *Life* by Motley.

BROME, said to have been a servant of Jonson, wrote some fifteen comedies, besides helping Heywood in *The Lancashire Witches*. *A Jovial Crew, or the Merry Beggars*, given in Dodsley's collection, is perhaps the best.

SHIRLEY. "The last of the great race of dramatists," says Lamb: "all of whom spoke nearly the same language and had a set of moral

feelings and notions in common. A new language and quite a new turn of tragic and comic interest came in with the Restoration." The *Traitor* is his first work. The lover of the higher drama may pass at once to our nineteenth century.

LANDOR, with proud modesty speaking of his dramatic writings, says, "None were offered to the Stage, being no better than Imaginary Conversations in metre." The distinction is a right one, though he underrated his own performances. He entitles them *Dialogues in Verse:* including as such even his five-act tragedies—*Count Julian*, written in 1810; *Inez de Castro; The Siege of Ancona;* and a trilogy (1838), *Andrea of Hungary*, *Giovanno of Naples*, and *Fra Rupert*. Chief among the briefer "Dialogues" are *Five Scenes of Beatrice Cenci*, worthy to be bound with Shelley's; and twelve scenes or conversations, under the heading of *Antony and Octavius*, written so late as 1855, in his eightieth year.

KEATS. The fragment of an unfinished play.

SHELLEY. *The Cenci* was written in Italy in 1819.

WELLS. The history of Wells' "Scriptural Drama" is one of the curiosities of literature. Written in friendly rivalry with Keats, it was published shortly after Keats' death in 1821, under the pseudonym of H. L. Howard; and dropped at once into oblivion, unnoticed, or unspoken of, even by so fine a critic as Hazlitt, the friend of both Keats and Wells. Thomas Wade, in his poem *The Contention of Death and Love*, in 1837, called attention to it, but in vain. Rossetti spoke again, admiringly, in a supplementary chapter of Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*. At last, in 1876, after half a century's neglect, Wells then alive, Mr. Forman obtained its republication with a noble and eloquent eulogistic preface by Swinburne. And again it seems unknown, lying in the dust upon some few shelves.

TAYLOR. *Philip Van Artevelde* bears date of 1834. Sir Henry Taylor's other plays are *Edwin the Fair*, 1842; *Isaac Comnenus*, 1845; *A Sicilian Summer*, 1850; and *St. Clement's Eve*, 1862.

HORNE. *The Death of Marlowe* (in one act), 1835; *Cosmo de' Medici*, 1837, and Gregory the Seventh, 1840 (five-act tragedies), place Mr. Horne beside the dramatists of the Elizabethan age. *Judas Iscariot*, a

miracle play, was written in 1848. In after years in Australia, 1864, he produced *Prometheus, the Fire-Bringer;* and so late as 1880 another tragedy, *Laura Dibalzo.*

DARLEY. Ethelstan, King of Wessex, fought against the Danes the battle of Brunanburh, the hardest-fought battle before Hastings, say the chroniclers, and commemorated in an old Saxon ode. This play, printed in 1841, as a former one, *Thomas a-Becket* in 1840, was intended by the author as part of a poetical monument "to the heroes of our race."

HUNT. *The Legend of Florence* (Leigh Hunt's one drama) was acted in 1840.

ADAMS. *Vivia Perpetua*, 1841, is Mrs. Adams' one dramatic work.

GRIFFIN. *Gisippus*, the only one preserved of four plays written before Griffin had completed his twentieth year, was brought out by Macready at Drury Lane, in 1842, two years after the author's death.

BROWNING. Besides *Colombe's Birthday*, first printed in *Bells and Pomegranates*, in 1844, Mr. Browning's dramatic works consist of *Strafford, King Victor and King Charles, The Return of the Druses, A Blot in the 'Scutcheon, Luria*, and *A Soul's Tragedy.*

KINGSLEY here dramatizes the true story of Elizabeth, daughter of the King of Hungary, as given in a Biography of her by Dietrich of Appold in Thuringia. Dietrich, born before her death, had spoken with those who knew her and had access to the approved writings concerning her: the "Book of the Sayings of Elizabeth's four Ladies," and the letter which Conrad wrote to Pope Gregory the Ninth—documents still existing.

SWINBURNE. *Chastelard* is the first play of a trilogy, completed by *Bothwell* and *Mary Stuart.* Mr. Swinburne's other dramas are *Atalanta in Calydon, Erectheus, The Queen Mother*, and *Rosamund.*

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